

HOME NEWS

P&O ferry service is to resume this week

By R. W. Shakespeare

Northern Industrial Correspondent

The P&O ferry service between Liverpool and Belfast is to resume this week. The company made the announcement last night at the end of a day of talks in Liverpool between the management and representatives of six unions.

A company official said it was likely that the first sailing would be on Thursday. The unions and the management will continue discussions on how to make the service viable.

Members of the crew of the Ulster Queen, one of the ferries which have been occupying the ship for the past five days have called off their action.

Last week P&O said it was cancelling the service, with the loss of 330 jobs, because of financial losses. It blamed industrial action, including the most recent dispute over pay, on its ships and on the Liverpool waterfront for some of its troubles.

The settlement was worked out in nearly six hours of negotiations between Captain Gerry McGowan, P&O's deputy chairman and fleet director, and representatives of the National Union of Seamen, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association, the Mercantile Marine Service Association, the Radio and Electronics Officers' Union, and ASTMS, the clerical workers' union.

Representatives of the 47 members of the crew involved in the sit-in on board the Ulster Queen had said they would see the ship "not in the docks" unless the company revoked its decision to end the service.

NUS threat: The executive of the National Union of Seamen has decided to intensify its campaign of "guerilla" action if the employers refuse today to accept a union invitation to take the dispute over the national pay claim to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (David Felton writes).

The union could instruct its members on deep sea vessels belonging to 14 so far unnamed companies to refuse to take them out of port. Action would also be taken against other deep sea fleets.

In addition, the executive decided that cross-Channel ferries could become targets if the General Council of British Shipping rejects an approach to Acaas on the union's 16 per cent pay claim.

The employers, who have offered 10.5 per cent, have been reluctant to go to arbitration, but they will announce their reply today after a meeting with their industrial relations experts.

1,600 more jobs to go as Ulster economy continues its decline

From Christopher Thomas

Belfast

Northern Ireland's beleaguered economy was dealt another blow yesterday with the announcement that 1,600 City Service jobs are to go by 1984.

The news came on the day of a visit by Sir Geoffrey Howe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was in no position to offer any comfort to the most economically depressed area of the United Kingdom.

The Civil Service cuts represent about 9 per cent of the total number of government jobs in the province.

The job losses are regarded by the admittedly weak trade union movement in Ulster as a devastating blow to a region suffering nearly 17 per cent unemployment.

In some parts of Belfast, mainly the Roman Catholic areas, the unemployment rate is 50 per cent or more.

Even relatively prosperous Protestant areas, which a decade ago had never experienced unemployment, are feeling the strains of Northern Ireland's declining industrial base.

Where terrorism has failed to drive industry away, economics have succeeded. "Loyalist" centres of employment such as Lisburn and Carrickfergus have suffered closures and cuts by big employers.

The loyalist stronghold of Harland and Wolff, the shipbuilders and repairers, which in the past has employed only the barest minimum of Roman Catholics, continues to decline.

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After being saved by government subsidies in four of the past five years, the future of the yard continues to look bleak.

The Government's remarkable generosity to the De Lorean car project in Belfast, which has received £64m in public grants and loans, demonstrates the acute difficulty of attracting viable industry to Ulster.

The exercise will cost more than £25,000 for every job created and few local politicians of any persuasion believe the project has been worth while.

Sir Geoffrey's main speech of the day, at a Stormont lunch, was far from encouraging.

He said that between 1971 and 1977 only 550 jobs were created as a result of investment from abroad because of the image of the province overseas.

Improved security, however, had brightened the situation since 1977.

Referring to the joint studies agreed after the meeting in Dublin between Mr Thatcher and Mr Charles Haughey, Prime Minister of the Irish Republic, on December 8, Sir Geoffrey said: "This is not a device for separating Northern Ireland from the rest of the United Kingdom."

He said that the trade unions and 1 per cent for other organizations.

It is simply a way of developing an already close relationship to the advantage of both countries including within the United Kingdom, that of Northern Ireland."

Photograph, page 12

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15



Adviser's arrival: Professor Alan Walters

Professor Alan Walters, Secretary of State for Education and Science, arrived in Belfast yesterday to join the staff as the Prime Minister's economic adviser.

Professor Walters, aged 54, is to be paid £50,000 a year. His appointment met protests from Labour MPs and it was also criticized by the Association of First Division Civil Servants, representing senior grades in Whitehall. He will receive £28,500, at a rank equivalent to a second permanent secretary, which will be topped up with £21,500 from the funds of the Conservative Centre for Policy Studies.

Photograph, page 12

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Business Diary, page 15

Paintings, bullion, and cash present disposal problems

Too much can be as bad as too little for a conscientious thief

By Stewart Tendler

Crime Reporter

Big is not always good in the underworld as the gang sentenced this week for the £3.4m silver bullion robbery can testify.

They were not to know that the rise in silver prices would turn their haul from a "far salmon into a whale".

The larger the haul, the larger the police interest and the larger the difficulty in disposing of it.

The gang may, however, take some consolation from the fact that they are not the first criminals to discover that silver is a mixed blessing.

They and the Great Train Robbers 17 years ago were victims of what could be described as the law of diminishing criminal returns.

The larger the haul, the larger the police interest and the larger the difficulty in disposing of it.

The effects of the law can be offset by having a reasonable idea of what you are stealing and knowing where to sell or spend it. The Great Train Rob-

bers were none too sure what they would get until they opened the mail train sacks and discovered £2.5m.

Their delight turned to chagrin as the police hunt some members of the gang could not wait to give the money back.

More than £100,000 was left lying in a Surrey wood and another £50,000 was found in a telephone box.

Money can be as difficult to get rid of as bullion. Some of the train robbers were found with their share of the money hidden close by. Like many other robbers, they had difficulties knowing where to put the cash even though it was in old, untraceable bills. Any large sum put into a bank will immediately attract attention, and a solution such as a safe deposit box involves a third party and records.

The difficulties are not confined to money and bullion. One senior London detective who spent months investigating several lorry thefts involving

cargoes of drink remembers that on more than one occasion the lorries and the loads were found dumped. The gang had simply stolen more than they could sell.

Such difficulties are as nothing compared with those of the art and antiques thief. Money, bullion, and bottles lack the individuality that gives a fine painting its danger. In 1974, a Varadero worth £125m was taken from Keenwood House, Hampstead. It was found in a churchyard two months later.

Yet the big theft is not without some advantage. No one knows exactly how much was taken from safe deposit boxes at two banks in London. A branch of Lloyds in Baker Street is thought to have had £3.5m stolen from it in 1971.

Even the burglar sometimes meets unexpected difficulties. However, the owner of a Yorkshire home returned to find that he had been burgled, but the thief had used his house as a place to dump four oil paintings from another theft.

The new amendment says they should be "spherically symmetrical". The rule has been issued at the same time as identical amendments from the governing bodies in the United States and Mexico so that a standard specification is set throughout the world.

Mr George Wilson, secretary of the Implements and Ball Committee at the Royal and Ancient, described the amendment as a pre-emptive move against technical developments which could give certain performance characteristics.

He said: "The new rule is not aimed at any particular brand or type of ball but the manufacturers admit they have been carrying out research into ways of making a golf ball do this, that or the next thing by changing the pattern of its dimples."

By non-symmetrical dimpling it is apparently possible to make a ball perform in a different manner which, the rule makers believe, is not in the best interests of either golf or golfers.

The amendment has been introduced after consultation with the manufacturers.

The temptation to market a "magic" ball, which because of its odd dimples clings rigidly to a line directly down the fairway no matter how haphazardly it was struck, would clearly be great.

Golfers recalled past efforts to produce helpful innovations, including the ball that contained an electronic "bleep" that could be found in the thickest undergrowth.

One informed golfer recalled coming across a "magic" ball in California. No matter how it was sliced the thing corrected itself and went the right way. Such a ball, he thought, could well have prodded the Royal and Ancient into action.

Prostitute death file still open

Lancashire police are keeping open their inquiry into the murder of Miss Joan Harrison, a prostitute, aged 26, whose body was discovered in a disused garage in Preston in November, 1975.

Her murder was attributed at the time by Yorkshire police to the so-called "Yorkshire Ripper".

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HOME NEWS

Court action planned to test cuts in services for disabled

By David Nicholson-Lord

Concern that the lives of disabled people might be endangered by "cruel and unnecessary" public spending reductions was expressed at a conference attended by representatives of voluntary organisations in Guildhall, London, yesterday, to mark the start of the International Year of Disabled People.

Some speakers asked for restoration of the 5 per cent cut from sickness and invalidity benefit, and told the Government not to "strut off its responsibilities on to voluntary organisations".

It was disclosed that a number of organisations for the disabled are to challenge the legality of some cuts in services. In what is thought to be the first case of its kind, an unnamed county council in the north of England has been given seven days to indicate whether it intends to install a hoist in a disabled woman's bungalow.

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, which is coordinating the action, said that if the reply was negative, proceedings would be begun for a High Court action against the council on the ground that it was failing to fulfil its obligations under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, 1970.

Concerted effort by charities

Mrs Ursula Keable, who is in charge of the project, said that further test cases were planned, covering areas such as charges for home help or day centres.

She said: "This is really a concerted effort by charities, triggered off by sheer horror at the way the needs of the disabled are being disregarded and services being eroded."

Among the speakers at the conference was Lord Snowden, president of the organizing committee for England, who called for an effort by the media to

help to ensure that the international year would be a "great deal more than that... the first 12 months of a new era of understanding and action".

Mr Kit Aston, chairman of the committee, said it had written to Mr Hugh Rossi, the newly appointed Minister for Social Security, urging restoration of the cut in invalidity benefit. It was needed, he said, to safeguard the disabled "against what could well be cruel and unnecessary cuts during the coming year".

Benefit reductions said to be shabby

Mr Jack Ashley, chairman of the parliamentary all-party disabled group, said that the disabled should vigorously oppose spending cuts and campaign during the year for more public spending, rather than "just indulge in sentiments".

He added: "We must seek a change in the Government's attitude. Without more cash from the Government, we have just got words and sentiments and promises."

Criticism of the government was also made by Mr Alfred Morris, the former Labour minister for the disabled, who is chairman of the world-committee. Mr Morris yesterday left Britain for Zimbabwe where he is to give the United Nations' newest member a preview of the 10-year world development plan for improving services to the disabled.

Mr Morris said more than 650,000 people had been affected by the "shabby" 5 per cent cut in benefit. "Britain must be about the only country in the world where the Government is marking the International Year of Disabled People with a cut in the living standards of large numbers of its most needed disabled people," he said.

Among special events planned for the year in Britain is a garden party to be given by the Queen at Buckingham Palace in July.



Photograph by Keith Waldergreen
Lord Snowden talking at the conference to Mr Charles Pockock, external public relations officer for Remploy, the largest employer of the disabled in the Western world.

Leaflets tell patients of mental tribunal rights

By Lucy Hodges

Every mental illness and mental handicap hospital in England and Wales has been sent leaflets telling patients about their right to appeal to mental health review tribunals and how they can be represented at them.

The leaflets have been prepared by MIND, the mental health pressure group, and hospital management committees have been asked to cooperate in the International Year of Disabled People.

In a letter to every hospital, Mr Larry Gostin, MIND's deputy director, asks for staff to make sure that every eligible patient receives a leaflet and has its contents explained.

Mental Health Review Tribunals, a step by step guide to leaving hospital (free from MIND, 22 Harley Street, London W1).

Windermere sports centre to be closed

From John Chartres

Manchester
The Sports Council announced yesterday that it would close its outdoor sports centre at Storr's Hall on Windermere for at least a year. The centre is one of the few providing water sports training for the public in the north of England, and was used by a growing number of disabled people to learn to sail.

The closure had been caused, the Sports Council said, by a combination of difficulties involving government finance, reconsideration of the organization's role in promoting sport, and because the owner of the site, the North British Hotel Trust, required a five-year contract which the council was unable to meet.

The sports centre, on the site of an hotel owned by the trust, whose headquarters are in Edinburgh, has provided canoe and hotel accommodation for up to 50 sports trainees at a time since the middle 1960s.

Discussions are continuing between the hotel group and the Sports Council on the site, which has been used for training in canoeing, water-skiing, fell walking and golf.

The decision to abandon courses during 1981 has come as a special disappointment to physically and visually handicapped people who have been learning to sail there, particularly since it has taken effect at the beginning of the International Year of Disabled People.

Voluntary organizations had hoped that some veterans for disabled sailors could have been held there in 1981, including a regatta for paraplegics and visually handicapped people, many of whom have reached an advanced stage in the skills required.

The North British Hotel Trust said: "A lot of options are still open and discussions are continuing with the Sports Council. It is unlikely, however, that the residential accommodation in the chalets will be available any more."

Strict security at castle for trial of murder and drugs charges

From Arthur Osman

Lancaster
More than 100 police officers, some armed and others with dogs, were deployed in and around Lancaster Castle yesterday, although it is reputed to be England's most secure courthouse and jail.

Armed officers patrolled the battlements of the old fortress while inside, in the splendidly escutcheon court, 10 male defendants were taken into the dock handcuffed to prison officers and two women were escorted by female officers.

A jury is not expected to be empanelled until next Monday to hear charges which allege murder against some of the men and various contraventions of the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971, against all of them.

The trial, before Mrs Justice Feilbrun, is expected to last between three and four months. Only 12 seats were available

for the public who, like the press, had to submit to rigorous searches.

Five men are accused of murdering Martin Christopher Johnstone in Lancashire between October 8 and 15, 1979. Mr Johnstone's body, without hands, was found in a quarry at Chorley and he was reported to be an important figure in the drug world of the Far East and Australasia.

The five defendants are: Alexander James Sinclair, aged 36, of Stafford Court, Kensington, London; Andrew Samuel Maher, aged 27, of Robin Hey, Leyland, Lancashire; James Smith, aged 28, of Derwent Drive, Livingston, Lothian; Frederick Charles Russell, aged 39, of Prince of Wales Road, Kenilworth, London; and Keith William Kirby, aged 27, of Clayton Brook, Lancashire.

Three of the murder-charge defendants, Mr Sinclair, Mr

Russell and Mr Kirby, have admitted charges of importing and supplying drugs.

The two other men on the murder charge, with six others, are charged with conspiring to import and supply controlled drugs, cocaine, heroin and cannabis, contrary to the 1971 Act.

The six others are: Jack Kelvin Barclay, aged 27, of Briar Close, Finchley; Errol John Hinchman, aged 32, of High Road, Leyton; Karen Mary Marie Soich, aged 24, of Stafford Court, Kensington; Christopher Scott Blackman, aged 36, of Princess Road, Regent's Park, all London; Kingsley Fagan, aged 27, of Oakbank, Craigknock, Strathclyde; and Sylvester Alphonso Pidgeon, aged 41, of Truro Road, London.

Mrs Leila Constance Barclay, aged 49, of Briar Close, Finchley, had pleaded guilty to conspiring to import and supply the same controlled drugs contrary to the 1971 Act.

Protection for the High Weald

By John Young

Planning Reporter

The High Weald of south-east England has been designated an area of outstanding natural beauty, the Countryside Commission said yesterday. It is the thirty-fourth area to be so designated in England and Wales and, at 560 square miles, the third largest.

The Weald extends from the coast between Hastings and Rye, across a swathe of Kent and East Sussex to the edges of Crawley and Haywards Heath in West Sussex. It consists largely of sandstone hills, orchards, farms, heathland, and deciduous woods that are remnants of the forests of pre-historic Britain.

As well as a rich collection of historic buildings and landscaped parks, the area is notable for its hammer ponds. They are relics of the medieval iron industry and important wildlife habitats.

Pharmaceutical firms delay test code

By Nicholas Timmins

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry is delaying agreement of a new code of practice aimed at ending so-called trials of existing drugs that are really promotional exercises.

The code has been under negotiation between the association, representing the drug industry, the British Medical Association and the Royal College of General Practitioners for more than a year.

The negotiations have followed criticism of some drug "trials" in which family doctors have been paid by drug companies for prescribing particular products and reporting back to them. Some of the studies have had little or no scientific value and there have been accusations that the trials were really to influence a doctor's prescribing habits.

Under the proposed code local ethical committees would have to be satisfied that a proposed study was scientifically

and ethically sound, and not just a thinly disguised promotional exercise.

Only when the ethical committees had approved the study could it go ahead.

The association's objection is understood to be that it wants the studies to go before ethical committees, not as a matter of routine but only if a family doctor asks that the study be cleared.

The BMA and the Royal College of General Practitioners want such clearance as a matter of course, to reassure both doctors and the public that the study is sound.

The association's objection is based partly on the ground that the procedure would be bureaucratic and it doubts that enough local ethical committees are sufficiently active to judge such trials.

The BMA will shortly try to revive ethical committees which have become inactive but believes that enough are operational to cover the studies in prospect.

In brief

TV bear's owner is prosecuted

Andrew Robbins, owner of Hercules, the bear that appears in a television commercial, who went missing for more than three weeks in the Hebrides last year, has been served with a complaint charging him with a contravention of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act, 1976.

Mr Colin Scott Mackenzie, procurator fiscal at Sornoway, said yesterday that he had decided to prosecute. The plea-bidier has been fixed for January 28 at Lochmaddy Sheriff Court, North Uist.

Scottish fans complain race commission

The Scottish division of the National Federation of Football Clubs has complained to the Commission for Equality about the Football Association's ban on the sale of tickets in Scotland for the England-Scotland match at Wembley in May.

Shotgun museum raid

Two raiders, one armed with a shotgun, attacked two attendants at the municipal museum in Hove, East Sussex, yesterday and escaped with antiques, and gold and silver watches valued at £25,000.

1,000 oiled seabirds

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds said yesterday that at least 1,000 oil-polluted seabirds have been counted still alive in the sea between Portsmouth and Folkestone.

Sheep-minding patrols

The Lake District special planning board services committee is to ask for volunteers for patrols over the Easter weekend to help to stop sheep-worrying.

Royal goose gift

A rare Siberian red-breasted goose from the Buckingham Palace pond has been given to the Wildfowl Trust at Peckirk, Cambridgeshire, to improve their breeding stock.

Octogenarian wedding

Mr Edmond Cash, aged 89, a retired shepherd, and Mrs Mable Pyrah, aged 83, are to be married today in the parish church at Nettleham, Lincolnshire.

Queen to open flats

The Queen is to open 46 flats for old people on the Sandringham royal estate at Derlington on January 26.

Lakeland lapses

Power boat offences at Ullswater, in the Lake District rose last year to 191 compared with 148 in 1979.

Coordinating body for food sales proposed

A new body to boost British-produced food sales at home and abroad was proposed yesterday by a member of the group appointed by Mr Peter Walker, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, to advise on better marketing techniques.

Miss Dena O'Carroll, corporate planning executive for Unigate, said such a new coordinating council's job should be to ensure that consumers got what they wanted when they wanted it, and that producers got a fair return.

Addressing the Oxford Farming Conference, she said: "In many cases, although the product is right, and the presentation matches up with the competition, British agricultural production loses out against imports because supplies cannot be guaranteed."

In so many areas of our economic activity this seems to be the problem.

"All the marketing expertise and expenditure is wasted if the goods fail to arrive when promised, or on a regular basis. We need, and must have, consistency of supply, and supplies must be organised to meet the demand generated by marketing initiatives," Miss O'Carroll said.

There was wide agreement about the need for a relatively poor showing in marketing terms against the competition, both in the domestic market and abroad, and agreement that something needed to be done.

"I have proposed that a central coordinating council be set up and I believe, most strongly, that in the national interest the

body should not be totally producer-orientated. It should represent the whole food chain, and not become 'just another consumer protection body'."

The council would also play a part in boosting food exports, worth £2,700m a year. "There has been a horrible lack of coordination in exporting. It is here the council could really give a worthwhile service."

Mr Alick Buchanan-Smith, Minister of State for Agriculture, who opened the conference, said: "The history of every trade cycle shows that as trade turns upwards, the benefits are reaped first and to the greatest degree by those who climb out of the recession first."

"Britain must be in the lead, not down the queue, when the recession turns."

Like other industries, agriculture had had to cope with inflation and high interest rates, he said. But the battle against inflation was being won, and as the economy improved, so should agriculture.

"More than this, agriculture has a positive role in generating that improvement." It was an important wealth creator, adding about £4,000m to the gross national product, and providing a big share of the £25,000m spent on food last year, a fifth of all consumer spending.

"Output means employment, and 650,000 people are employed directly in farming, and as many again indirectly as a result of the purchases agriculture makes," Mr Buchanan-Smith said.

Vicar on £4,100 forgoes full pay rise

From Our Correspondent

Chichester
A country vicar said yesterday that he would not accept the 19 per cent rise in stipend he is entitled to from April.

The Rev John Brown, Vicar of Westhampnett, near Chichester, will take a 6 per cent rise and the balance of £554 a year will go to his parochial church council to help with church expenses. His stipend of £4,100 a year was due to rise to £4,900.

"I do not think a 19 per cent pay rise is justified when many other people are being restricted to 6 per cent," Mr Brown, aged 52, who is married and has three children, said yesterday.

The Church of England is in need of money and by making over some of my pay rise by covenant to my PCC I am helping the Church as a whole."

Mr Brown's wife, Shirley, is a hospital night sister. She agrees with his decision.

Acid-throwers jailed for raid on shop

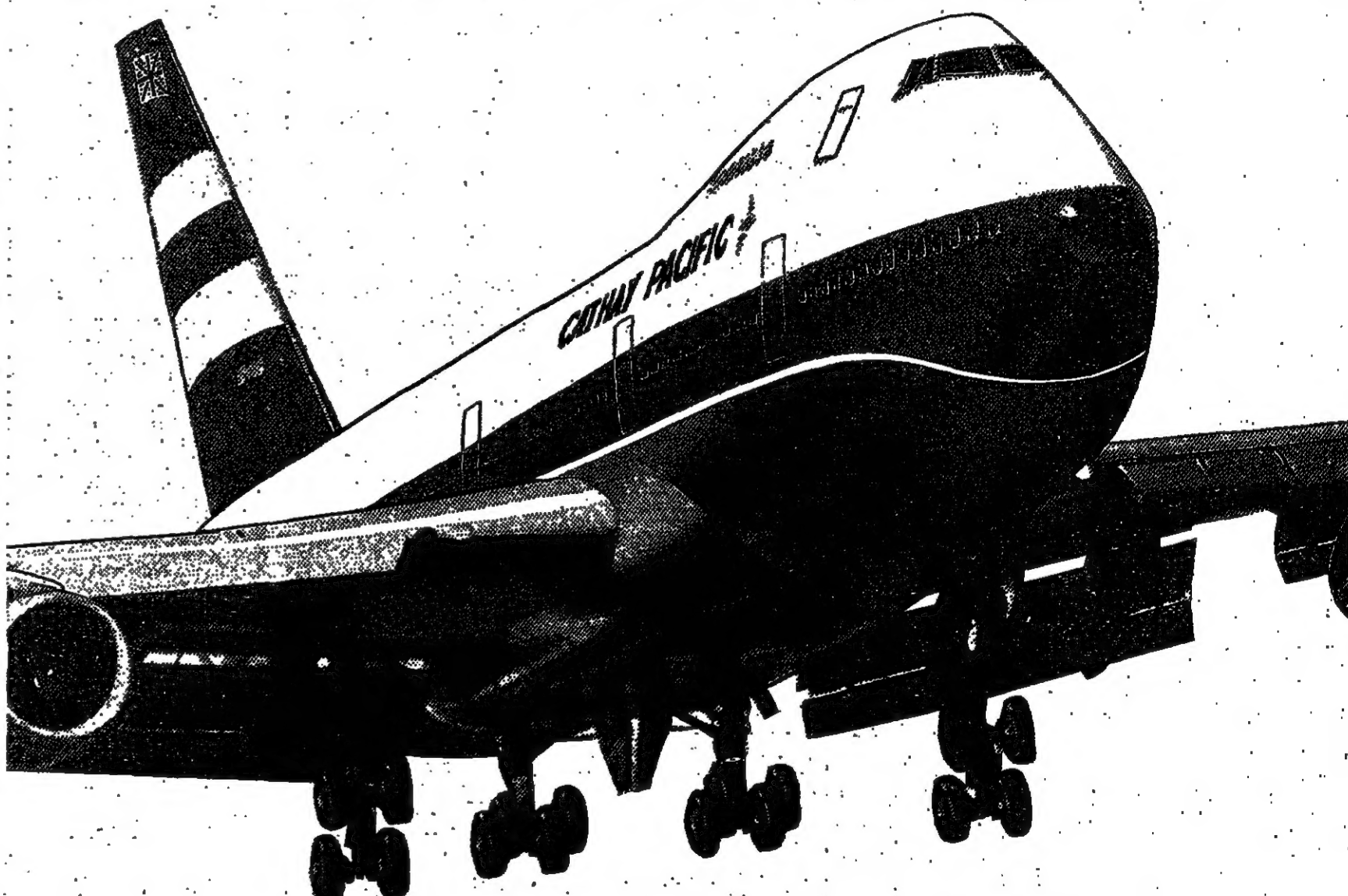
From Our Correspondent

Chichester
Two young men were jailed by Judge Martin QC at Middlesex Crown Court, yesterday, for their part in an attempt to rob a shopkeeper, during which a mixture of sulphuric and hydrochloric acid was flung over him, causing burns to a third of his body.

Cameron Joseph Mitchell, aged 20, of Station Road, south Tottenham, London, was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and Derek Norman Washington Smith, aged 18, of Roundway, Tottenham, to eight years.

They had pleaded guilty to throwing acid upon Mr Batak Rajhathat at his shop at Conway Road, south Tottenham, on June 9, 1979, with intent to cause him grievous bodily harm, and to attempting to rob him.

Det Sergeant David Crompton said that Mr Rajhathat had had a number of plastic surgery operations.



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HOME NEWS

Blair Peach coroner accused of bias in civil liberties report

By Nicholas Timmins

Mr Blair Peach, the New Zealand school teacher who died during the Southall demonstration against the National Front in April 1979, was killed by a blow deliberately inflicted by a member of the Special Patrol Group, the unofficial inquiry established by the National Council for Civil Liberties has concluded.

In a review of the evidence given to the inquest last year into Mr Peach's death, which the jury recorded as a verdict of misadventure, with riders, the committee said yesterday it believed that the violence used against him was "unjustified, unreasonable and unlawful".

The unofficial committee, chaired by Professor Michael Dummett, Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford University, accuses Dr John Burton, the coroner, of "evident bias, and of a confused and inaccurate account of the facts of the case which made a fair hearing impossible."

The committee calls for important changes in procedure for inquests, and says that Sir David Marjoram, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, should urgently decide whether disciplinary proceedings are to be taken against individual officers.

The recommended changes in inquest procedure include the appointment of a judge in place of a coroner where the death occurred in suspicious circumstances; the right for counsel for each party to sum up; giving all parties access to all the evidence obtained by the coroner; and restoring the

right, recently ended, of juries to add riders to their verdict.

At the Peach inquest the report of Commander John Cass's investigation into the death was available only to the coroner.

The committee says the changes are necessary because "public confidence in the police depends on a visibly rigorous and impartial investigation of any case where the police themselves are suspected of breaking the law."

"We do not believe that inquests as at present constituted come anywhere near meeting this high standard; in particular, the Blair Peach inquest did not."

The committee says that at a meeting with Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, in July, it gained the impression that he was far from thinking that fault for events at Southall lay entirely with the demonstrators.

The impression, however, had not been given to the public. No government minister had suggested that the police were in any way at fault. Yet confidence in the police had been undermined.

Scotland Yard said yesterday that disciplinary proceedings against a number of officers, both in relation to the Blair Peach death and to other incidents, were still being considered.

The DPP has decided that there is insufficient evidence to prosecute anyone in connection with the death of Blair Peach. Supplementary report of the *Unofficial Committee of Inquiry*, £1.50, from NCCIL, 186 King's Cross Road, London WC1X 9DE.

House prices static last quarter

By Margaret Stowe

House prices are static. Detailed statistics from two of the country's largest building societies show that house prices in the last quarter were unaltered (Nationwide) or 0.2 per cent down (Abbey National).

Over the year there is a greater divergence between the two societies' average house price rise. Nationwide reports that the annual rate of increase, measured by the loans it made, was 9 per cent. At Abbey National, the rate of increase slowed to 5.4 per cent.

The difference is accounted for by variations in the "mortgage mix", the range of properties upon which societies are lending money at any one time, between the two societies.

House price inflation is now running well below the annual increase in retail prices, normally 15 per cent last year, and the estimated increase in average earnings of 20 per cent or more. Both Nationwide and Abbey National agree that the ratio of house prices to earnings has returned to a long-term relationship of about 3.3 times.

The recent cut in mortgage rates should stimulate activity in the housing market, Mr Leonard Williams, chief general manager of the Nationwide, said, although he doubted that there would be "a rapid and unacceptable upsurge in house prices in 1981".

Prejudice at school is alleged

By Richard Garner

Dr Amal Chatteropadhyay, a teacher at Holloway School, Islington, London, was subject to a campaign of victimization after he had claimed he was refused promotion because of his colour, it was alleged at an industrial tribunal yesterday.

Dr Chatteropadhyay is claiming racial discrimination by Mr George De Spinoza, the headmaster, the school's board of governors, and the Inner London Education Authority.

He applied to be head of the school's history department, but the job was given to Mr Roger Disky, a junior teacher, the tribunal was told. In a letter of complaint to the education authority, Dr Chatteropadhyay said that he believed the decision had been made on racial grounds, a claim denied by the authority.

Mr Arnold Rosen, counsel for Dr Chatteropadhyay, who is being supported by the Commission for Racial Equality, claimed that his client had been subjected to a campaign of unlawful victimization by Mr De Spinoza and the education authority after making his complaint.

Dr Chatteropadhyay began teaching in Islington in 1964. He is a qualified barrister and two years ago started a law course at the school.

The hearing continues today.

Wolverhampton paper signs new technology agreement

From Clifford Webb

Mr Bryan Summers, father of the *Express & Star* NUJ chapter, said yesterday: "The computer video screens and keyboards which we operate in head office, are a damn sight more easy to get on with than typewriters. We were given about 20 hours training, but after about 20 minutes is quite enough."

The system still stops short of the highly controversial single keying issue, that is direct keying by journalists into the printing computer. The Wolverhampton computer still produces written copy that is set by members of the NGA operating electronic keyboards allied to photocomposition.

Asked why a provincial newspaper had made so much progress while Fleet Street stood still, Mr John Ibbotson, the NGA's provincial officer, replied: "Nobody in Fleet Street has attempted to introduce a computerized system which is restricted solely to journalists and stops short of single keying."

"There is no reason why Fleet Street papers should not do what the *Express & Star* has done," Mr Ibbotson said that his union had given an undertaking to talk about single keying over the next three years.

Mr Mark Keren, managing director of the *Express & Star*, and a former industrial reporter, said: "If we have a secret it is that we have taken the steps along with us every step of the way."

NUJ attacks secrecy habit

By a Staff Reporter

The National Union of Journalists has appealed to its members who sit in Parliament to support the Freedom of Information Bill, which is down for a first reading next Wednesday.

Mr Frank Hooley, Labour MP for Sheffield, Heeley, is introducing the Bill, which would put the onus on the Government and Civil Service to demonstrate the need for secrecy, as in Scandinavia and the United States.

In a letter to 21 MPs who are

WEST EUROPE

Commission in conclave to share out the jobs

From Michael Hornsby

Brussels, Jan 6

Mr Gaston Thorn, the new president of the European Commission, went into conclave here this evening with his 13 fellow commissioners to begin the delicate task of deciding who will do what job over the next four years.

At a brief ceremony earlier in the day Mr Roy Jenkins, the outgoing President, formally handed over to Mr Thorn, a former Prime Minister of Luxembourg, and wished him luck. He is likely to need it if past experience is anything to go by.

Hoping to avoid the traditional "night of the long knives," Mr Thorn and his colleagues decided to meet only for a few hours today and to resume their discussions tomorrow. But despite this more civilized procedure, there may still be blood on the Commission's elegant wall-to-wall carpet before the work is done.

Commissioners are appointed by member states, but not to any particular jobs. The known preferences of national governments for their men strongly influence the allocation of jobs, but there is a genuine element of horse-trading which cannot be rigged in advance.

Mr Thorn's room for manoeuvre is even more cramped than usual at this stage. This is first because, with the addition of a new Greek commissioner, he has to conjure up an extra job when there are not enough really worthwhile portfolios to go round as it is.

The four big countries, Britain, France, Italy and Germany, still have two commissioners each, attempts to persuade them to give up one of their commissioners having failed. All other member states



Mr Roy Jenkins, left, and Mr Gaston Thorn, the new European Commission President.

are represented by one commissioner apiece.

Second, and much more important, eight members of the old Commission have been reappointed to the new body and all of them appear to be keen to hang on to their previous responsibilities.

This creates a conflict of interest between Mr Christopher Tugendhat who has been promoted to senior British commissioner and is staying on for another four years and Mr Ivor Richard the former Labour MP who comes in as Britain's number two.

Mr Tugendhat wants and

fully expects to retain his existing budget responsibility. He is therefore unlikely to challenge the right of other incumbents to stay put if they wish. But this drastically limits the number of jobs open to the newcomers, such as Mr Richard, to fight over.

Ideally, Mr Richard would have liked to be in charge of relations with developing countries. But M Claude Cheysson, the able French Socialist, wants to keep this. At second best he would like industry. But that is occupied by the formidable Belgian Vicomte Etienne Davignon.

Eurocommunism is rejected by Catalan party congress vote

From Richard Wigg

Madrid, Jan 6

The continuance of the Eurocommunist line of the Spanish Communist Party led by Señor Santiago Carrillo, is threatened after a rejection of the term by the Catalan Communists.

At the congress in Barcelona of the United Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSUC) 424 pro-Soviet delegates last night defeated the outgoing Eurocommunist leadership, which mustered only 339 votes with 21 abstentions.

The vote at the first of several party congresses due this year is significant for the entire political scene. The Catalan Communists want a return to old-style class combativeness in Spain's biggest industrial region where they are strongly represented.

There was undoubtedly some skilled manoeuvring by Stalinist officials still entrenched in the party apparatus who were determined to keep the party road to power, even for Catalonia. They have been able to exploit a widespread working-class disillusionment with the actual fruits of Spain's new democracy, inflation, and serious unemployment particularly among Catalonia's formerly flourishing textile mills.

In a series of votes the whole policy approach represented by Señor Gregorio López Raimundo, the party's veteran president, once condemned to death and then glorified as General Franco, and by Señor

Antoni Guterres, its secretary-general, were defeated by the pro-Soviet delegates. The Eurocommunist line, the Workers' Commissions, the Communist trade unions, was also defeated.

The Catalan Communists' rejection of Eurocommunism is an alarm signal for Señor Carrillo, who will be 66 this month and faces his own national party's congress later this year. He has already come under growing attack from some younger elements who accuse him of too easy an accommodation with Spain's "bourgeois democracy" after growing years in exile or clandestinity.

Señor Carrillo, dubbed a "conservative of the left", has been accused of running the party internally with an iron hand while talking "outside of socialism" in democracy and of ignoring everyday working-class problems. His critics are demanding a new combative-

ness to the Soviet Union, except that on the invasion of Afghanistan, and inserted many phrases endorsing the Soviet line internationally, the result is a similarity with the Portuguese Communists of Dr Alvaro Cunhal.

One of the most significant votes won by the pro-Soviet majority came on the religious issue. Since the Catalan Communists emerged from clandestinity to take part in Catalonia's emerging regional politics, the party won an important sympathy vote among left-wing Roman Catholics, particularly the personal following of Señor Alfonso Comín, a Catholic socialist.

The United Socialist Party of Catalonia fought past elections with the slogan: "We are your party and the party of everyone." The routed Eurocommunist party has now condemned itself to the kind of "ghetto vote" in future elections the French and Portuguese communist parties must.

The high degree of openness in the public debate at the congress enabled observers to spot the personal following of Señor Carrillo in the industrial belt managed to slip in identical copies of amendments critical of the outgoing leaders into resolutions presented by delegates from rural parts of Catalonia.

Pro-Soviet figures have been elected to the posts of long party president and secretary-general.

Italian swop offer to kidnappers

From John Earle

Rome, Jan 6

Mr Luigi Bettazzi, the Bishop of Ivrea in Piedmont, today offered himself as a hostage in exchange for Giovanni D'Urso, an appeal court judge and senior official of the justice ministry's prisons department, who was kidnapped by the Red Brigades on December 12.

Writing in his diocesan weekly, Mr Bettazzi recalled that more than one bishop offered himself in exchange for the late Aldo Moro, the Christian Democrat leader kidnapped in 1978 and then killed. The Bishop said he was "available now", adding: "I will not draw back, if it is necessary. Perhaps the Brigatisti need only to affirm themselves. The state cannot allow this. But then, as today, a human life has a value such as to justify making every effort."

Most newspapers and state television are observing a self-imposed limitation on reporting the kidnapping, refusing to publish the texts or contents of Red Brigade communiqués and proclamations though still giving news of terrorist activities.

It has become known that the D'Urso family received a letter on Sunday from the judge in which he is reported to have begged them to ask leading newspapers to publish a long Red Brigade document on the prison system. There is little chance of such a request being accepted.

Five MPs of the small left wing Radical Party today visited Trani maximum security prison. They were told that relatives of some of the inmates have alleged that prisoners were beaten up after the suppression of a revolt there on December 29. Lake area searched for arms. Police today mined road blocks around Rome and combed the area of Lake Bracciano, 25 miles to the north in an attempt to save the life of Dr D'Urso. They refused to say what the alleged case had to do with the kidnapping, but concentrated on the lakeside area but admitted that time was running out for the judge, who was condemned to death after a "people's trial" by the Red Brigades—Reuters.

Career diplomat new French envoy to Britain

By David Spenser

Diplomatic Correspondent

M. Emmanuel Jacquin de Margerie will be the new French Ambassador in London, taking up his post next month, it was announced yesterday. He will replace M. Jean Sauvage, marguerite, who is to retire soon.

M. Jacquin de Margerie, at present Ambassador in Madrid, comes from a family with a long tradition of service in the diplomatic corps. His father has also been posted to London.

I am unusual appointment for a career diplomat. M. Jacquin de Margerie was Director of Museums in France from 1975 to 1977. He had previously served in Washington, Tokyo and Moscow, and spent four years in the French Embassy in London as a second secretary from 1955-59.

Aged 56, he is married and has two children.

Horses die after being left in French railway wagon

From Ian Murray

Paris, Jan 6

The French national railway company (SNCF) and an export company in Hendaye, Pyrénées Atlantiques, are both being investigated, by police for cruelty to animals after the death of three horses in a railway wagon on the way to abattoirs near Paris.

The horses, imported from Spain, were discovered by a railway worker at the suburban station of Juvisy last Friday. He investigated when he heard their anguished squeals.

He found four horses in the wagon parked in a siding a hundred yards away from the station. They had only about 25 square yards of space—according to law, is adequate for only eight horses their size.

He found that, contrary to the law, they were neither

tethered nor separated by partitions. Nobody was looking after them, as the law also provides with no food or water since leaving Spain on New Year's Eve. The wagon was sealed.

The horses had apparently become maddened and had trampled on each other three had died. Their three-day journey had still not ended when the wagon was spotted by the railway worker, because the wagon was waiting in a siding for a suitable train to take it to the abattoirs.

Although the SNCF was aware that the journey would take more than 24 hours, it had been unable officially to do anything to provide water or food for the animals because French customs had sealed the wagon when it crossed the border from Spain.

Killer wolf shot

Paris, Jan 6—A wolf was shot dead in the Basse-Pyrénées near Larrau—the first in the area since 1935. In a month it had killed seven lambs and a dog.

Veterans throng to funeral of Dönitz

From Patricia Clough

Bonn, Jan 6

To long-discarded lines of presentation, *Deutschland über alles*, Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz, the last commander-in-chief of the wartime German Navy and Hitler's successor as head of the Third Reich, was buried today in the snow-covered graveyard at Ammühle near Hamburg.

About 5,000 naval veterans, refugees he had saved from the advancing Soviet Army and members of extreme right-wing groups attended the funeral which was ignored by the West German state. Ironically, he had died honoured more by his former enemies than by his own country.

No military honour, no government or official military representation attended the funeral of this brilliant commander, who devised and fought the merciless submarine warfare against Britain and its allies.

Bundeswehr had forbidden officers to wear uniform for the occasion, Karl Dönitz, with his fanatical loyalty to Hitler, his blind devotion to duty and disregard for thousands of sailors' lives, was not an example for today's armed forces.

But in buses, cars and trains, mourners came to his funeral, many of them old men with an upright military bearing. Iron Crosses glinting on their breakers and endowing nostalgia for what Dönitz stood for.

In subdued voices they criticized the Government's attitude. Two Bundeswehr officers defied the ban on uniform and there were whistles as the state's absence.

For two hours a stream of mourners filed out to the tiny brick Bismarck memorial church in the snowy forest outside Ammühle, where Dönitz had lived in seclusion for the past quarter of a century.

There, former naval officers in civilian clothes formed a guard of honour around the coffin, draped with the red, black and gold flag of the Federal Republic and bearing his service decorations. On a cushion were his medals, Knight of the Iron Cross and Imperial Medal from the First World War. Many had to be almost forcibly removed so the service could begin.

Among the many wreaths from Germany and abroad was one from Herr Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy, still serving a lonely life sentence in Spandau prison, Berlin. Dönitz had served 10 years in Spandau for war crimes.

Old naval flags were carried ahead and veterans' band played as they later moved over to the cemetery. After the coffin was let down into the grave, the mourners spontaneously broke out into the best verse of *Deutschland über alles*, now rejected because of its association with German nationalism and the Nazi past. West Germans now sing the last verse beginning "Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit" (unity, justice and freedom).

In a tribute, former Rear Admiral Edward Wagner said that by his blind obedience to

Hitler, Dönitz had involved himself in the guilt of the Nazi leadership, although, he added, he bore no guilt in a legal sense.

The only comment from political circles was a tribute from Herr Friedrich Zimmermann, parliamentary leader of Herr Franz Josef Strauss' conservative Christian Social Union, who said he had been a brave soldier who did his duty.

West German commentators here were surprised at the tributes paid in Britain to the grand admiral and a couple of newspapers put it down to admiration of the gallantry towards a defeated enemy. Here, no newspaper had an obituary as long as that in *The Times* and almost all were far more critical than the British press.

The Germans remembered that his dogged determination to carry on the submarine war to the bitter end cost the lives of nearly 30,000 sailors—including his own two sons—and thousands of allied seamen. They remembered his passionate speeches in support of Hitler to the very end of the war and his failure, to his death, to see that he might have acted otherwise.

There is scepticism about his insistence that he had no idea, being at sea most of the time, of the crimes of the Nazi regime. He did not want to know, they suggested.

On the other hand, besides his service as a commander, he is credited with saving between two and three million refugees from the east in his ships and, during his 23 days as Hitler's successor, bringing the war to a rapid end.

Several newspapers supported the Bundeswehr's decision not to give the grand admiral military honours. The decision was important, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* said, "because the Bundeswehr's concept of the citizen in uniform must be different from the very type of officer which Dönitz so perfectly and so faithfully embodied—the pure military specialist."

The weekly *Die Zeit* remarked: "He was not a model for the Bundeswehr."

A letter, now waiting to have been written by Dönitz some years ago and left with an Italian lawyer to be published after his death, has reached *The Times*.

Couched in imperfect and in places untranslatable English, it was addressed to the British people and urged all Europe to unite against Soviet Communism.

It had been left in the safe-keeping of Signor Ruggero Berardi, a lawyer in La Spezia, by a doctor, the same town, Signor Giampaolo Porta-Casucci, who said he had been in correspondence with Dönitz while he was serving 10 years in prison for war crimes.

Herr Otto Kränzbühler, the Munich lawyer who had also received a similar letter, said that by his blind obedience to

Nuclear power station house bombed

From Our Own Correspondent

Paris, Jan 6

A house bought by the French electricity authority to house senior staff for the proposed nuclear power station at Plogoff in Finistère was damaged by a small bomb early this morning.

Snowfall delays Mr Trudeau in Vorarlberg

Bregenz, Austria, Jan 6—Heavy snowfall and poor visibility today forced Mr Pierre Trudeau, the Canadian Prime Minister, to delay his planned departure from Lech in Vorarlberg province, where he has spent a skiing vacation.

A police officer at Lech said the adverse weather conditions ruled out a flight by helicopter to take Mr Trudeau and his staff to Salzburg where he was to have had a meeting with Dr Bruno Kreisky, the Austrian Chancellor, before departure.

Snow has been falling in the Lech area for three days.—AP.

Dog's 48 days under rubble

Avellino, Jan 6—A wire-haired terrier, named Reno was dug out alive today from the ruins of his home in Avellino, 48 days after it was destroyed in the south Italian earthquake.

A fire brigade spokesman said Reno's owner, a girl of 19, revisited the remains of her home and heard faint whining under the rubble. She called the firemen. Reno had survived on raw water—Reuters.

Hunger strikers sue over drip feed

From Our Own Correspondent

Paris, Jan 6

Two of the six Corsican autonomists who have been on hunger strike for 56 days have instructed their lawyers to start legal proceedings against the prison doctors who forced them over the weekend to be given a drip feed.

The Corsicans were arrested nearly a year ago and are due to be tried on Wednesday of next week. They began their hunger strike in an attempt to force the courts to release them on bail.

A decision on this request is due to be given on Thursday together with a report on their medical condition. According to the defence lawyers, two of them are so ill that they could die before Thursday, and in any event they will be unable to stand trial next week.

The two were given a drip feed over the weekend despite

their protests and one of them was given a blood transfusion. All six are under medical supervision in the prison hospital.

The six are to be tried together with 11 others on charges of belonging to an armed gang and of kidnapping. They were among 59 people arrested after an attempt by autonomists a year ago to put two members of their militant organization on public trial.

The Francia group has been renamed for more than 50 bombings on the island against autonomists and their property. When two Francia leaders were captured by the autonomists a year ago, a series of sieges and police raids took place in which three people—including a policeman—died.

The two Francia men were provisionally released from prison in November, which provoked the hunger strike. The autonomists claimed that the law was giving preferential

treatment to avowed terrorists, whose bombings were in support of "French colonialism" in Corsica.

A prison service bulletin on the health of the hunger strikers today said that the life of none of them was in danger, but one of them had to be kept almost permanently on drip feed.

The mayors of six Corsican towns were yesterday received by the prefect as charged the case for the release of the six hunger strikers. The beginning of the new court session in Ajaccio was today discussed briefly by a demonstration mounted by 30 relatives of the prisoners.

There were nine explosions throughout Corsica during the night, causing a good deal of damage but no casualties. Nobody has claimed responsibility, but it is believed that they were caused by autonomists to mark the anniversary of last year's violent incidents.

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OVERSEAS

Iran counter-attack victory is wishful thinking, Iraqis claim

From Tewfik Mishlawi

Beirut, Jan 6. Iraq and Iran made conflicting claims today about a counter-offensive which the Iraqis say they launched yesterday to drive Iraqi forces from strategic positions in the Iranian oil province of Khuzestan.

While Iran reported the obliteration of two Iraqi armoured brigades and the capture of 2,000 prisoners, Iraq said the claim was a "myth and wishful thinking".

Neither country's claim could be independently verified and western journalists have been barred from on-the-spot reporting from either side of the war front.

The Tehran radio and television announcements of "glorious military victories" by the Iranian forces have been received with considerable excitement in Iraq.

Thousands lined the streets of Ahwaz, provincial capital of Khuzestan, hailing the capture of thousands of Iraqi soldiers, Tehran radio said. In Tehran the rooftops were crowded with people chanting "Allah Akbar" (God is great).

Although the Iraqi state media have ridiculed the Iranian counter-offensive claims, they admitted that Iranian forces were trying to harass the forward positions of the Iraqi army.

Said Iraqi forces, supported by artillery and helicopter gunships, were thwarting Iranian attempts to achieve military gains.

For more than a month Iraqi troops who invaded Iranian territory on September 22, have been taking a defensive stance. Their leaders said their targets had been achieved but recent reports from Iraq said the present position was imposed by the Iraqis.

In Baghdad, Iraq reported fierce battles with Iranian forces a few hours after the Iranian claim. The Iraqi high command said fighting was still raging around the besieged Iranian town of Susangerd.



Map showing the border area between Iraq and Iran, specifically the Khuzestan province. Key locations marked include Basra, Ahwaz, and Susangerd. A scale bar indicates 50 miles.

which Iranian forces had attacked from three directions yesterday.

The Iraqis described this as the main part of the Iranian counter-offensive and said Iraqi troops had beaten back other attacks at Ahwaz to the east and Gilan-e-Gharb to the north.

Iranian communiques today said that more than 800 Iraqi soldiers were killed and 345 others wounded in the past 48 hours. Iraq, on the other hand, said its forces have killed 100 Iranian troops and destroyed 21 tanks for the loss of 11 Iraqi "martyrs".

Pushed by Ayatollah: The claimed Iranian counter-offensive was planned on December 20 by Ayatollah Khomeini and Iranian leaders, President Bani-Sadr wrote in today's edition of the Islamic Revolution.

Mr Bani-Sadr said the Ayatollah had asked the military men why the offensive "which has been discussed for some time" had not yet been launched.

He also reported the Ayatollah as saying that "if we do not go ahead with the offensive, morale in the country could be upset and we could witness the birth of a danger before which I myself and the President would be impotent".

Meanwhile Paris news agency says that five extreme leftwing spy networks working for Iraq since the beginning of the war, have been uncovered. —Agence France-Press.

Ayatollah puts his faith in Algeria over hostages

Tehran, Jan 6.—Ayatollah Khomeini told his Government today to accept undertakings by Algeria aimed at solving Iran's hostage dispute with the United States.

Mr Khomeini, the Prime Minister, said, Algeria has been acting as an intermediary during the crisis.

Mr Rajai, answering questions on state television, did not say whether he was referring to the moves by the Algerians or whether the Ayatollah was simply giving his blessing to the Algerians as mediators.

Questioned about the hostages issue as he and his Cabinet left a meeting with Ayatollah Khomeini, Mr Rajai said: "The explanation to the Iranian side, the United States view and also Algeria's suggestion that it undertakes to solve the problems between us and America."

"The Imam told us to accept this (Algerian) undertaking. I hope we will announce the remaining issues soon".

Three Algerians working on the hostages dispute, who delivered the latest American proposals on Friday, today met Iranian government officials but did not receive a new Iranian response, diplomatic sources said.

Informed sources also said that the Tehran Government could soon give its official reaction to Washington's most recent proposals for freeing the 52 hostages.

A leading member of Iran's Islamic Republican Party said yesterday that the United States had failed to give acceptable financial guarantees to secure the hostages' release. —Reuters and Agence France-Press.

Israeli paper responds to Egyptian press ban

From Moshe Brilliant

Tel Aviv, Jan 6

The Jerusalem Post, in a leading article prepared for tomorrow's edition, assures Egypt that the paper has no ulterior motives in its reporting of that country's affairs. The article follows the Egyptian Government's ban on the paper's correspondents after Mr Anan Sefidi, the Middle East Affairs editor, reported a power struggle among the Cairo authorities.

Mr Sefidi, who spent a week in Egypt and returned on Friday, wrote yesterday that President Sadat was considering a Cabinet reshuffle aimed at thwarting Mr Hosni Mubarak, the Vice President, from assuming too much power.

The Post article said that a better understanding of how the Israeli press worked must be part of the normalization process in relations between the two countries.

In a second report today Mr Sefidi speculated on the consequences of Mr Mubarak's rise to power. He said Egyptian officials interviewed had agreed that Mr Mubarak would not scrap the Middle East peace process, but that he would restrict the normalization process with Israel while the Palestinian problem remained unsolved.

The officials also said Mr Mubarak intended to improve Egyptian relations with the Arab states and might even revive ties with the Soviet Union.

In Israel, a television series on the history of Zionism opened tonight against a rumble of protests by Jews from Islamic countries who alleged ethnic discrimination.

A group calling itself "Zionism for Equality" lost an eleven-hour attempt to stop tonight's showing when the Jerusalem High Court rejected its suit.

Jews of Middle-Eastern and North African stock, who now comprise the majority of the Israeli population, had hardly been involved in the political Zionist movement which led to the establishment of Israel in 1948.

Oriental Jews, living under colonial rule last century were unable to express themselves politically, Mr Shaul Ben Simon, a trade union leader, said. He is one of the initiators of the High Court suit.

Zionism was primarily a spiritual and religious movement. In this respect, the Eastern Jews were in the forefront, he said.

"It is politically unwise to show Zionism as a reaction to pogroms in Europe," Mr Yosef Lapid, director-general of the broadcasting authority, said he was sure no one would have any complaints after seeing the series. He said the producers had gone out of their way to stress the important place of Eastern Jews in the establishment of Israel.

The 19 sequences of the series called *Pillar of Fire* will be shown weekly.

Instead, the new Administration should wait until it had set the country firmly back on the path towards nuclear equivalence with Moscow, Mr Weinberger told a meeting of the Senate armed services committee. The Defence Secretary-designate was among a first batch of Mr Reagan's Cabinet nominees to face congressional confirmation hearings for their new jobs.

Mr Weinberger described the present imbalance in Soviet and American strategic forces as both "very marked and very worrying". It would be one of his two principal priorities as Secretary of Defence to start catching up with the Soviet Union "quickly and resolutely", he said.

The Defence Secretary designate made it very clear that he fully supported Mr Reagan's view that the strategic arms

limitation agreement negotiated by President Carter was too flawed to be ratified by the Senate.

He said he thought the new Administration would need at least six months to work out its defence policies before approaching Moscow with an offer for new negotiations. Any new agreement would have to be a "vast improvement" on the so-called Salt 2 pact, he added.

Asked about his attitude towards defence spending by America's allies in Europe and Japan, Mr Weinberger said he intended to keep "pressing" the importance of the defence burden as they could.

He blamed part of the allies' past reluctance on "uncertainty" about the course of American policy. If Washington had a "consistent" policy and demonstrated its strength and reliability, the allies would be much more willing to participate in the common defence effort, he believed.

Mr Weinberger said his other main priority in enhancing the United States defence position was to improve the readiness of the country's existing forces. Many of them were under-strength and were

experiencing fuel and ammunition shortages, he said. Both their training and their equipment had to be improved.

Members of the armed services committee listened respectfully to Mr Weinberger's responses to their questions and appeared to agree with his every pronouncement. His approval by the committee was expected to be virtually unanimous after such a friendly reception.

The President-elect, who arrived in Washington from California last night, by way of Mexico, today announced the appointment of Mr James Brady as White House Press Secretary. Miss Karna Small, a former television news announcer, will be his Deputy.

Border meetings: President-elect Reagan and President Jose Lopez Portillo of Mexico agreed to meet periodically in border towns to discuss issues causing friction.

Mr Reagan told a Washington audience on his return from two hours of talks with Lopez Portillo at the Mexican border town of Ciudad Juarez that their meeting had been "very successful and wonderful".

Middle East policy, page 10
Leading article, page 11

Members work full speed to modernize armed forces with vastly increased budgets

Pressure grows for overall Asean defence agreement

This is the last of four articles from David Watts, Our Singapore Correspondent, on the Association of South-East Asian Nations. The previous pieces appeared yesterday, on Monday and in Foreign Report on Friday.

The Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean) does not have an overall defence agreement to parallel its economic one; but in the years since its formation pressures for some kind of military arrangement have been growing.

In the past 18 months those pressures have intensified to the point where most of the countries in the association are now working full speed on military modernization programmes involving new equipment and bases and vastly enlarged military budgets.

Repeated disclaimers that Asean would ever become a military alliance are becoming less and less credible. Yet there are cogent political and ethnic reasons why such a multinational pact is unlikely ever to embrace all the Asean countries in a single agreement.

Since the end of the Vietnam war, and more particularly since the American debacle at the time of the revolution in Asia, the countries of South-East Asia have been well aware that should any of them face a serious threat from the communist block nations in the area

the best that they could hope for would be improved supplies of weapons and ammunition, political and moral support and very little else.

The United States Seventh Fleet is always available as a deterrent to any would-be usurper of South-East Asian sovereignty and the Americans might even deploy aircraft in support of its regional allies.

But to expect anything beyond that has become unrealistic, unless the incoming Reagan Administration drastically changes the course of United States policy.

After the American withdrawal from Vietnam and Kampuchea in 1975 it appeared that the region might stabilize militarily. But the invasion of Kampuchea by Vietnam at the beginning of 1979 and Vietnam's subsequent incursion across the Thai border last June aroused fears that the Vietnamese might well decide to annex Thailand at some date in the future and later move down the Malay peninsula to Singapore.

The response of the South-East Asian countries can be judged from the increase in military spending in 1980 over 1979: Singapore's defence spending has increased by 27.2 per cent, Indonesia's by 45 per cent and Malaysia's by 140 per cent.

The enormous Malaysian increase in spending results from the Government's new policy of changing the Army

Asean defence spending in 1980 (in US dollars)	Percentage increase over 1979
Indonesia 2,100m	45
Malaysia 887.8m	140
Philippines 778.5m	33
Singapore 588.9m	27.2
Thailand 1,100.9m	17.2

Asean military manpower
Indonesia 241,800
Malaysia 66,000
Philippines 112,800
Singapore 42,000
Thailand 30,800

Asean combat aircraft: 448

from a fundamentally anti-insurgent force to a conventional Army employing heavy tanks for the first time. The frontline strength of the Air Force is more than doubled and a completely new base has been built in the north-east of the country.

The Air Force is buying 80 second-hand McDonnell-Douglas Skyhawk fighter-bombers which are to be refurbished before supplementing the Northrop F5 Freedom Fighters which the Air Force already operates.

The stress that regional governments put on updating and upgrading their air power is illustrated by the fact that Thailand is seeking further F5s as well as strike aircraft. Singapore is expected to purchase more F5s, while Indonesia has just received the first batch of

Hawk strike/trainers ordered from Britain.

During the year from 1978 to 1979 American military sales to Thailand jumped from \$100m (\$42m) to four times that figure. This included 50 M48 tanks, armoured personnel carriers and transport aircraft.

But even with this burgeoning military strength, were it to be deployed jointly under an Asean banner, it would be no match for the Vietnamese who have armed forces of more than a million men and large numbers of American aircraft left behind at the end of the Vietnam war, though the serviceability of many of them must be in doubt.

Even if such unification were politically possible there would be enormous problems of integrating the forces of the various countries with their wide variety of equipment, their different military backgrounds, not to mention the problems of language.

There is too much residual suspicion and jealousy for the armed forces of all the Asean countries to be able to unify their activities, so the cooperation is limited to the exercise on bilateral military relations.

The principal defence arrangements remain with powers outside the region: the United States has links with Thailand and the Philippines through the Manila Pact, and the five-power defence agreement that links Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand and Britain and

which Australia is instrumental in trying to revive with regular exercises.

Australia, too, tries to make up for Singapore's lack of air and ground space for military training by providing Skyhawk training facilities. Malaysia retains too much distrust of Singapore's intentions to allow training of the Singapore armed forces on its territory.

The most obvious potential guarantor of Asean's defence, superlatively, would appear to be Japan, now building up its armed forces. Japan would certainly have the motivation for such cooperation but it is as yet by no means clear that the perceived requirements of the Japanese armed forces are going to be met even in the domestic context.

Though there would be interest in guaranteeing the continuity of Japanese oil supplies through the Straits of Malacca, the Second World War is still too recent and the Japanese are far from building the necessary confidence in political relations with Asean.

More than one Asean leader, commenting on the Japanese defence posture, has made it clear that it will be welcomed so long as it is confined to Japan's immediate area of interest around the home islands.

So, should Vietnam prove as adventurous as some believe, it will be a long time before the countries of Asean are capable of putting up anything more than a token resistance.

Geneva talks on Namibia in jeopardy

From Nicholas Ashford

Geneva, Jan 6

The United Nations sponsored pre-implementation talks on Namibia (South-West Africa) are due to get under way tomorrow with no sign that the main parties involved are prepared to talk to each other or even sit at the same table together.

So far the South African delegation—which is attempting to play a low-key role at the conference—is refusing to talk directly to the nationalist South-West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), although there is widespread expectation the two sides may hold informal contacts.

For its part SWAPO has rejected attempts by the most prominent of the eight internal Namibian parties, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), to be accorded equal status at the talks. SWAPO says it will only deal with the DTA and the other internal parties as part of the South African decision led by Mr. Danis Boshoff, the South African appointed administrator-general of the territory.

A proposed seating plan by the United Nations would place the internal parties on one side of a square table and SWAPO on the other. The other two sides of the table would be occupied by the United Nations and by the multitude of observers attending the meeting.

The observers represent the five front-line states—Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia—the five members of the Western contact group—Britain, the United States, France, West Germany and Canada—and the Organisation of African Unity.

Mr Theo Ben Gurirab, SWAPO's spokesman, said today the organization had come to Geneva to deal directly with South Africa on the implementation of the United Nations settlement plan for Namibia. "A failure of the meeting would be South Africa's responsibility," he claimed.

Death toll: A total of 81 SWAPO guerrillas have been killed by South African forces in attacks on their bases in the past week, it was stated in Windhoek today (Ray Kennedy writes from Johannesburg). The toll indicates a marked escalation in the bush war.

Sex package protest to Mr Suzuki

From Peter Hazelhurst

Tokyo, Jan 6

Mr Zenko Suzuki, the Japanese Prime Minister, is expected to face an embarrassing protest against package sex tours of Japanese businessmen in the Philippines when he arrives in Manila on Thursday on the first leg of a 12-day visit to the five members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

Japanese officials admitted today that the Government is aware that more than 50 religious bodies and student groups in the Philippines have already signed a petition asking the Japanese Government to put a stop to the thriving business of organized sex tours of Manila and other hotspots.

It says: "Dear Mr. Prime Minister, your forthcoming visit to the Asean countries will be greatly marred by Japanese businessmen who invade the region in groups on sex tours and humiliate Filipino women. An estimated 1,500,000 Japanese men trouble the Philippines and other nations of south-east Asia last year."

Whites blamed for arms raid near Salisbury

From Our Correspondent Salisbury, Jan 6

A cache of weapons has been removed from an army barracks here by a group of white men using forged papers and wearing Zimbabwe Army uniforms, it was stated by a military source tonight. It is believed the weapons have been flown to South Africa.

The weapons, including more than 100 rifles, machine-guns, pistols and rocket launchers, disappeared between Christmas Eve and December 25.

It appears that five men presented themselves at Cranbourne Barracks, near Salisbury, and produced forged requisition papers for the arms. They would then load on two lorries that had been stolen from a barracks near by and driven to an airstrip.

Cranbourne Barracks belonged to the Rhodesian Light Infantry, until it was disbanded last year.

Man accused of Lennon killing to plead insanity

From Our Own Correspondent

New York, Jan 6

Mark Chapman, accused of murdering John Lennon, the former Beatle, pleaded not guilty in a short court appearance here today. His lawyer said his defence would be insanity.

The judge appointed two psychiatrists and a psychologist to examine the prisoner's state of mind. He has already received long psychiatric examination and supervision at Bellevue hospital in Manhattan since his arrest.

Wreaths and flowers are still being placed outside the New York flats where Lennon lived.

Defiant judge takes three girls to all-white school

From Michael Leapman

New York, Jan 6

The legal wrangle over where three white Louisiana girls should go to school continued today with another victory for Mr Richard Lee, a state judge.

He accompanied the trio to an all-white school in the rural village of Buckeye after Mr Nauman Scott, a federal judge, had ordered them to attend a mainly black school at Alexandria, 15 miles away.

Yesterday Mr Lee instructed state police to escort the girls to the Buckeye school to make sure they were enrolled there. The policemen did so but later said they would not be there again today because they had

Sit-in protests by Polish farmers

From Dossa Trevisan

Warsaw, Jan 6

A month of truce on the Polish labour scene has been disrupted as the latest social conflict surfaced again with trouble over free Saturdays.

This comes on top of trouble in south-east Poland where the farmers are occupying local government buildings and threatening to go on strike unless talks begin this evening.

The authorities in south-east Poland are evidently set on obstructing the creation of farmers' union branches. This provoked new tension and several hundred angry farmers have occupied the local government buildings in Urszyski Dolne in protest over alleged official harassment.

They have been joined by several hundred more in Rzeszow who have occupied the seats of the regional council of the old trade union and are demanding the transfer of the funds of the disbanded union.

By noon, the Solidarity Union in Przemyśl staged an hour's warning strike in support of the farmers. Soon after that government negotiators arrived and talks began on the farmers' demands.

The farmers threatened to call selective strikes and to call further strikes throughout the region unless an agreement is reached by the end of this week.

They demand that the region's Federation of Workers and Farmers, affiliated to Solidarity, should be registered forthwith, and are protesting against police harassment designed

US 'too weak' for new Salt pact

From David Cross

Washington, Jan 6

There was very little "point" in the United States negotiating a new strategic arms limitation agreement with the Soviet Union from its present position of military weakness, Mr Caspar Weinberger, President-elect Reagan's nominee for Secretary of Defence, said today.

Instead, the new Administration should wait until it had set the country firmly back on the path towards nuclear equivalence with Moscow, Mr Weinberger told a meeting of the Senate armed services committee. The Defence Secretary-designate was among a first batch of Mr Reagan's Cabinet nominees to face congressional confirmation hearings for their new jobs.

Mr Weinberger described the present imbalance in Soviet and American strategic forces as both "very marked and very worrying". It would be one of his two principal priorities as Secretary of Defence to start catching up with the Soviet Union "quickly and resolutely", he said.

The Defence Secretary designate made it very clear that he fully supported Mr Reagan's view that the strategic arms

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* It is requested that for safety reasons no prams or pushchairs can be admitted. However, limited pram parking space available and baby harnesses supplied on request. Invalid chairs admitted only by prior arrangement with the Organisers. Regret no dogs.

EARLS COURT

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OVERSEAS

Tribal elders run into conflict with ways of modern Malaysia

From M. G. G. Pillai
Kuala Lumpur, Jan 6

The system of traditional native chiefs in Malaysia, who form an informal but important level of administration alongside the modern administrative apparatus Britain imposed a century ago, is being put under dangerous strain.

The system has worked well up to now with the state accepting the authority of the chiefs on matters relating to adat (customary law). It has also not interfered in the selection of chiefs and tribal elders.

But now a rift has developed in Negri Sembilan state between the native chiefs of the territorial district of Jelebu and the state administration over the selection of its territorial chief or *undang*.

Observers versed in adat laws say the outcome of this could have repercussions outside the state and lead to a continuing confrontation between the native leaders and the state administration.

Seven of the eight members of the Dataran Lenggong, or Council of Tribal Elders, objected to the appointment of the new *undang*, a 42-year-old headmaster, Mr Musa Wahab. They claimed that their chief had not discussed the appointment with them and that Mr Musa did not come from the traditionally approved families from among whom the *undangs* are selected by the Dataran Lenggong.

The chief thereupon expelled the seven from the council and stripped them of their traditional titles in a move which, the seven say, violated adat laws.

But their appeal to the Majlis Adat—the Court of Appeal for customary law—over their expulsion and the appointment was rejected. So was one to the civil courts, which said they had no jurisdiction.

The seven got together last week and appointed their own *undang*, a 67-year-old government pensioner named Mr Syed Zin Alhaj bin Syed Husin. Observers here say that the move would leave a trail of

bitterness in the *luak* and the state, whatever the outcome, since they say the appointment of Mr Musa Wahab appeared to contain significant departures from adat law.

The traditional chiefs have a role to fulfil in all the nine states in Malaysia, but it is strongest in Negri Sembilan. Jelebu is one of nine *luaks* that form Negri Sembilan, and the *undangs* known as the Yang di-Pertuan Besar or Yamtuan. They have the power to depose him as well.

Most of the tribal elders and the *undangs*, in Negri Sembilan as elsewhere, are relatively poorly educated, said one official skilled in adat laws, "although their knowledge of their own history and culture is deep. It would put many a professional politician to shame."

The seven men allege outside interference in the selection of their territorial chief, pointing to the fact that the state's Chief Minister, Datuk Rais Yatim, is from Jelebu and Mr Musa is his close friend.

The crisis will have to be solved according to the state's adat laws, but technically the seven men have committed a serious offence by going against the decision of the Majlis Adat. Indications are that suitable punishments are being considered, the most serious being exile from the state for life.

But the issue has split the *luak* right down the middle and observers say it is a classic case of friction between native leaders and those brought up in the Western mould.

The politicians hope the problem will go away, but they have to live with it. About a year ago the Sultan of Pahang state wanted to remove one of his territorial chiefs, Datuk Hamzah Abu Samah, who also sat in the Federal Cabinet as the Attorney-General. He was dissuaded from doing so, but Datuk Hamzah was dropped from the Cabinet when the Sultan was elected Malaysia's king soon afterwards.

Republicans brief Taiwan on Peking discussions

Taipei, Jan 6.—President Chiang Ching-kuo of Taiwan today met Mr Theodore Stevens, a United States Senator, and Mrs Anna Chenault, a Republican official, for an hour after their three-day visit to Peking at the weekend.

No details of the conversation were disclosed but Mr Stevens and Mrs Chenault were expected to have told the Nationalist President about other things about their two-hour discussions with Mr Deng Xiaoping, the Communist Party Vice-Chairman.

They are the first United States Republican officials to visit China since Mr Ronald Reagan's presidential election victory in November.

Mr Stevens, deputy majority whip and chairman of the defence appropriations Subcommittee in the Senate, while Mrs Chenault, widow of General Claire Chenault, a Second World War "Flying Tiger" commander in China, is a member of the Republican Finance Committee. She is of Chinese origin.

The Peking visit by the Americans, both supporters of Taiwan, has prompted speculation that they were paving the way for peace talks between Taipei and Peking. This they have refused.

However, a "new channel" had been opened between the rival Chinese nationalists and communists, a Western observer asserted here today.

Whether that channel will be used, fully, partially or not at all, will be determined by the development of the triangular relationship between Taipei, Peking and Washington, the observer said.

Senator Stevens and Mrs Chenault this morning laid wreaths in front of General Chenault's bronze statue in a local park.

At the Foreign Ministry they had talks with Mr Chu Fu-sung, the Foreign Minister, and Mr Fredrick Chien, the Deputy Foreign Minister. They also met Admiral Soon Chang-chih, Chief of the General Staff, Mr Wong Yi-tung, Economic Minister, and Premier Sun Yun-suan. — Agency France-Press.

Chaos as Uganda drivers seek petrol allocation

From Our Correspondent
Nairobi, Jan 6

A decree making motorists register for their fuel allocation has caused chaos in Kampala, the Ugandan capital. Queues of vehicles up to three miles long jammed the approaches to the disused Kololo airstrip, where registration is taking place.

The Ugandan authorities say motorists will be allowed to draw fuel only at a named petrol station. This is an attempt to halt the flourishing black market in which petrol is sold at up to 20 times its official price.

Severe shortages have affected Kampala and other parts of Uganda for several weeks. The Government says it has now increased the amount of foreign exchange allocated to buy fuel.

Constitution is changed for one Sri Lankan politician

From Our Correspondent
Colombo, Jan 6

The Sri Lankan Parliament tonight amended the constitution by 134 votes to seven in order to increase the number of seats by one.

It took this step after the Supreme Court ruled that legislation to increase the membership of Parliament from 168 to 169 to enable two members to represent the Kalawana constituency would be a violation of the constitution.

The court also said such a change would require a two-thirds majority and would have to be endorsed by a national referendum. Mr Ranasinghe Premadasa, the Prime Minister, said government would abide by the ruling.

In tonight's debate opposition Freedom Party speakers were frequently booed and heckled, and a suggestion by Mr W. Dahanayake, the former Prime Minister, at an earlier meeting for a free vote was refused.

Mr Anura Kumaratunga, speaking for the opposition, said that if the Government could resort to amending the

15 Turks held in raid by security police

Adana, Jan 6. — Security

forces in the southern Turkish province of Adana captured 15 suspected members of an outlawed leftist organization, a martial law communiqué said today.

It did not identify the organization but said the group would be charged with wounding a lieutenant during a May Day demonstration last year, writing political slogans on walls, distributing extremist leaflets, and "conspiring to overthrow the constitutional regime in Turkey by violent means".

Adana, Turkey's fourth largest city, was affected by political and sectarian violence before the generals' coup on September 12.—AP.

THE ARTS

Moving curtain to the Offenbach centenary

Les Contes d'Hoffmann
Teatro Comunale,
Florence

John Higgins

Virtually the last statement on *The Tales of Hoffmann* in the Offenbach centenary year just ended came from Florence. The cautionary adverb is needed for chronological accuracy because the *Hoffmann* in Leeds already described by Paul Griffiths on this page, postdated that of the Teatro Comunale by a few days. At the close of a substantial evening, some four and a half hours including intervals, Nicklauss leads Hoffmann by one hand across the empty stage, carefully carrying in the other the glass of wine which for so long has been that storyteller's inspiration. Together they part the gauze curtains and look out at the audience, Hoffmann's audience.

As Hoffmann walks slowly towards the footlights and down a ladder into the orchestra pit the stage gradually fills. His four lovers (Stella, Olympia, Antonia, Giulietta) come on first, followed by his adversary, Lindorf. Hoffmann moves through the stalls carrying many a backward glance, whether rueful, piteous, or even perhaps contented is not revealed. By the time the stage is completely full he has vanished into the darkness. Perhaps it is to spin another tale or perhaps to go, like Offenbach after this opera, to his grave. Hoffmann, *This Is Your Life*.

The close of Luca Ronconi's production is also its pinnacle. When it was first announced that Ronconi was to direct Hoffmann in Florence most people assumed that he would opt for something striking, iconoclastic. Ronconi has a justified reputation for standing operas, and plays for that matter, on their heads to see what falls out of their pockets. And few works are more malleable in the producer's hands than Hoffmann, as the past year has proved.

The beginning was in pure Ronconi *bravura* style. Nicklauss brings the drunken Hoffmann back to Luther's Tavern in a carriage drawn by a horse upside down between the shafts. Hoffmann's head and shoulders are also hanging upside down out of the window, so that he gets an inverted view of the world. Or is it merely a case of flogging a dead horse on the belly?

Thereafter Ronconi narrates the opera much according to tradition, although he follows the Salzburg example of restoring the role of Nicklauss to its proper strength: reinstating the Olympia act aria, which is all too often cut, and presenting Nicklauss as much more than merely a slow-witted and surly companion. He is Hoffmann's Muse, an inspiration far more potent and desirable than the women the poet chases and loses.

It is possible though that elsewhere the wings of Ronconi's imagination have been mercilessly clipped. The *Hoffmann* has gone through a number of vicissitudes since it was originally put on the drawing board. Alfredo Kraus, who was cast in the title role,

dropped out early on. Possibly he was influenced by Florence's decision to use the new Oser version of the opera, which extends the tenor's part considerably and requires him to be on stage for nearly the whole of a long evening. The next tenor engaged, Peter Jurgen Schmidt from East Germany, also cancelled, leaving the Teatro Comunale with their third choice, Neil Schloff, who managed to oblige with a triumphant performance.

Among the ladies, Christine Ede, a Paris has heard, also had to leave the cast. But the biggest blow of all came when Riccardo Muti, Florence's musical director who, with Massimo Bogiack-

ino, is the driving force behind the city's musical renaissance, retired because of hepatitis. Some of the Italian newspapers, including *La Nazione* last weekend, have been claiming that Muti is intending to loosen his ties with the city, a disaster for Florence, which as much Muti's domain as Milan is that of Abbado. Quite a lot has been made of an alleged quarrel between Muti and Ronconi.

With all these attendant tribulations it is surprising that Hoffmann is as good as it is. For that most of the credit goes to Neil Schloff. The young American tenor's appearances in Britain have indicated a good deal of promise; Florence hears the achievement. He has much in com-

mon with Alfredo Kraus: a dapper appearance on stage, and a fine cutting edge to the voice which slices through the auditorium with more effect than some of those with "bigger" tenors.

Schloff's Hoffmann is a youngish man—the German poet died in his mid-forties—not yet too ravaged by drink. Wine is still the mistress and not yet the master. He pursues his dreams with an almost adolescent enthusiasm, blinded by Olympia, spurned by Antonia, who prefers the sound of her own voice to the love of another, and finally humiliated by Giulietta as she glides off in her gondola. Let him go, let him tarry, let him sink or let him swim. So Hoffmann returns again and again to the stable

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Offenbach looks down on the world of Hoffmann (Le Monde illustré)

dropped out early on. Possibly he was influenced by Florence's decision to use the new Oser version of the opera, which extends the tenor's part considerably and requires him to be on stage for nearly the whole of a long evening. The next tenor engaged, Peter Jurgen Schmidt from East Germany, also cancelled, leaving the Teatro Comunale with their third choice, Neil Schloff, who managed to oblige with a triumphant performance.

Among the ladies, Christine Ede, a Paris has heard, also had to leave the cast. But the biggest blow of all came when Riccardo Muti, Florence's musical director who, with Massimo Bogiack-

ino, is the driving force behind the city's musical renaissance, retired because of hepatitis. Some of the Italian newspapers, including *La Nazione* last weekend, have been claiming that Muti is intending to loosen his ties with the city, a disaster for Florence, which as much Muti's domain as Milan is that of Abbado. Quite a lot has been made of an alleged quarrel between Muti and Ronconi.

With all these attendant tribulations it is surprising that Hoffmann is as good as it is. For that most of the credit goes to Neil Schloff. The young American tenor's appearances in Britain have indicated a good deal of promise; Florence hears the achievement. He has much in com-

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SPORT

Tennis

Strangers on the same side of the net

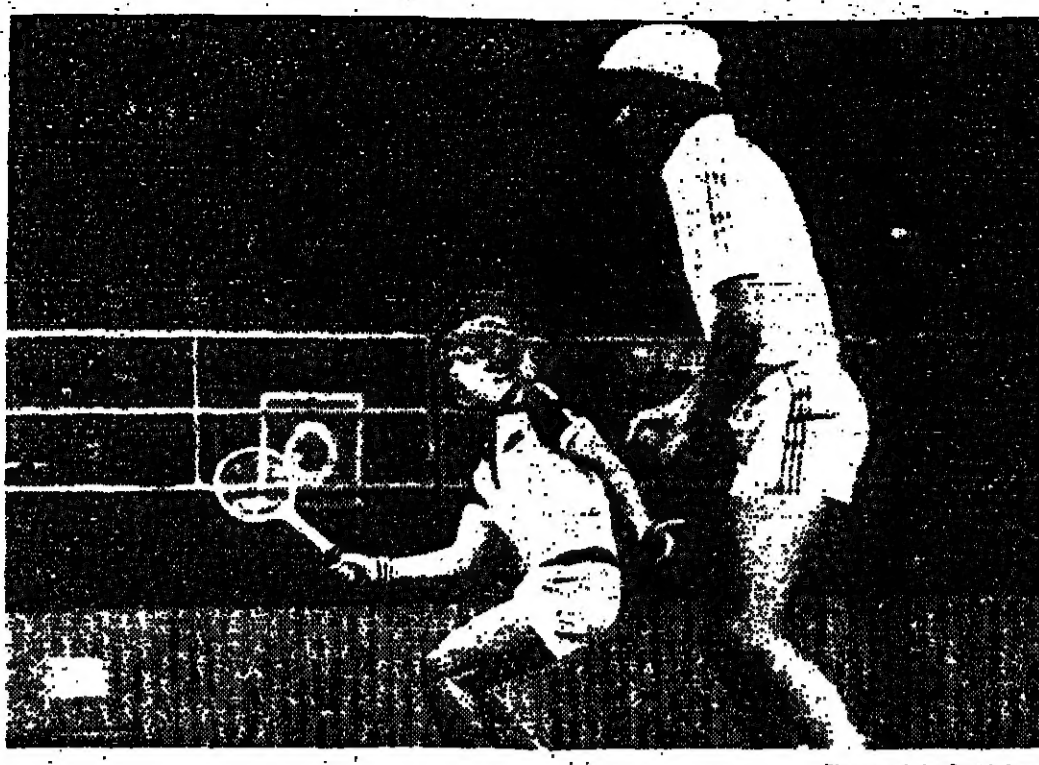
By Rex Bellamy
Tennis Correspondent

Victor Amaya and Hank Pfister, two large Americans, beat Fred McMillan and Christopher Mottram 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 in the first match of the World Championship Tennis doubles tournament, sponsored by Braniff Airways, at Olympia last evening. As McMillan and Mottram had never before played on the same side of the net, the result was less surprising than the fact that their opponents won the French championship on slow clay in Paris last June.

Amaya and Pfister have a combined height of 12ft 11in and weigh in at more than 29 st. With a lean or a lurch they seem capable of reaching almost anything that comes their way—and they give the ball a very sharp tap indeed. But as they showed in their earlier matches, they are not only big but also very smart. They also played with a great deal of finesse and the booming, swinging projectiles launched by Amaya's long left arm.

On this occasion, they served well except for an occasional stutter and the rest of their games fell neatly into place. Amaya demonstrated a resilient beauty of being both hilly and left-handed and Pfister had the confidence and touch to produce a few angles that even forced much closer to the net.

They broke Amaya to lead 3-2 in the first set, but lost seven of the next eight games. They had two break points against Amaya



In the frame: Mottram (left) seen through the racket of his partner McMillan.

in the seventh game of the second set—and broke him again in the fourth game of the third. But what with missing a few chances and losing their own service games at regular intervals, they were always in trouble after that promising start. Pfister never had a break point against his opponents, and the final of the match, the tennis was often admirable but fell some way short of enchantment. There was time to notice the presence of a service line, at opposite side with each man calling the shots on the most distant corner of the

line. There was also time to wonder whether the extraordinary outfits worn by the line judges (loose-fitting black with bars of white) had been designed in consultation with a committee on penal reform. The second match was better, but equally brisk: a 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 win by Heinz Günthard and Mayer both wore black shorts and long-sleeved shirts and looked ready for beach games. They were ready for tennis too. They have impressive doubles records with other partners and now worked well in harness. Current and Denton are a

regular team but that could not quite compensate for what is currently a slight difference in class. Denton's overheads were potentially powerful, but he has more than a sporadic if startling influence on the match. In some ways, these two should be in the promoters' pen. They are graduates of the University of Texas, and Dallas is the headquarters of both WCT and Braniff. Current and Denton are not doing for yet. They were only the first of four days in a round-robin series before four teams qualify for Saturday's semi-final round.

Wimbledon prices up and facilities improved

By Rex Bellamy

The cost of a centre court seat during the last three days of the Wimbledon championships, to be played from June 22 to July 4, has been raised from £8 to £11. Air Chief Marshal, Sir Brian Burnett, the chairman of the championships committee, said yesterday: "There is a feeling that we have always undercharged for the last three days. We believe it still represents extremely good value compared with other major sporting events."

Great prices on the two main courts will again be increased every three days. All will cost more than they did a year ago, except for the two days on court No 1. The ultimate price on the centre court shows the largest percentage increase, 37.5. But on court No 2, the combined cost of admittance to the grounds and a seat has been raised from £5.50 to £6 and an increase of £2.50 on the cost of admittance to the grounds is unchanged at £2. Customers can expect slightly less concessionary seating, but no concessionary seats will be available. Catering facilities will be relocated. There will be 1,250 more seats on court No 1, raising the total to 17,000. The new seating will be a larger stand overlooking court 14. Additional concessionary seats on the promenade outside the main grounds will be added to restrict to 31,000 the crowd inside the grounds at any one time.

Wimbledon are spending about £2.75m on ground improvements. Apart from the public's benefit, the improvements will be a boon for the players (as enlarged restaurant, a new lounge, a new bar and a new women's dressing room), the referees and umpires, and the ball boys and ball girls. Court No 1 will also have a new scoreboard, electronically controlled—the first stage of a system that will eventually improve information services throughout the premises.

The prize money for the singles main events, including the two prize winners, has been increased to £275,579 for the men's singles winner will receive £22,600, the women's £19,440. Only 16 players in each singles will earn more than the prize money. When Wimbledon's £24,340 contribution to the grand prize pool is included, the total of £425,500 for the United States championships (which represents four times the maximum prize money for the four grand slam tournaments).

Don't think we should slavishly follow the Americans, said Sir Brian yesterday. "Big money does not necessarily bring you the best tennis," he said. "The prize money is already too high, but we think some increase is right because of inflation and so on." To accept the authority of the men's grand prize supervisors but, under pressure, have agreed that four players will be exempted from the prize money and the prize money will be shared by the four grand slam tournaments.

The big titles eluded Miss Austin and Miss Navratilova. For each the season which ends with the Masters tournament, and the prize money is already too high, but we think some increase is right because of inflation and so on.

Residents will be pleased to know that in an effort to discourage the occasional nuisance of overnight queuing, Wimbledon will be closed to the public on the day of the final. There will be no permanent structures envisaged—merely a "village" of marquees by the four new courts.

Cricket

Over-rate culprits face fines in Australia

From Dilip Rao

Sydney, Jan 6—The Australian Cricket Board, where they meet on January 14, will take strong measures against declining over rates, possibly by introducing a system of fines. There are earlier moves in that direction, but legislation was stayed when state captains gave assurances that they would lift the pace of the game during the current summer.

But the tempo has fallen rather than been stepped up and officials of the board view declining over rates as one of the primary causes for crowds staying away from Sheffield Shield games and Test matches.

In the circumstances, the board might also give consideration to reviving the old system of over rates in Australia for many years, until the season of 1978-79. The change has undoubtedly reduced the number of balls bowled during an hour, but Australians consider a hundred to be the minimum acceptable limit.

In the third Test match between Australia and England, played here on Sunday, Australian bowlers sent down 75 balls per hour, while the English batsmen took 11 minutes to get out. The average over rate was 11.8 balls per hour.

As far as this series is concerned, not all the blame for slow

over rates must fall on the bowlers. Dennis Lillee, for instance, marched up to his start in the manner of a gunsman on parade and was recorded as taking 30 overs in 34 seconds. Kapil Dev took eight seconds less and both spinners finished a normal over (that is one in which there was no excessive no-ball activity) in less than three minutes.

Delays seem to be more prolonged during the changeover of fields between overs and the donning, doffing and storage of the kit by the side which is batting. The England series in Australia of 1974-75, the one made famous by Tyson and Statham, is often pointed to as the turning point of slow over rates in Test cricket.

That may be historical fact, but it is interesting to compare current over rates with those achieved by Tyson, Statham, Loader and Ashley under Sir Leonard Hutton. They averaged 11.8 balls per hour.

Procter captain again Mike Procter will captain Gloucestershire for the fifth successive season in 1981. He will fly from South Africa for the annual meeting in Bristol on February 10 when he will be formally nominated. Procter, who has played for Gloucestershire since 1968, is coach and marketing director to the Natal Cricket Association.

Oxlade's successful day comes to painful end

Geelong, Jan 6—New Zealand batsman Oxlade, who had a brilliant day in the first day of the Geelong and Districts on the opening day of the three-day match here, came to a painful end.

Oxlade added 56 for the second wicket with the captain, and four with Anderson, and 80 for the sixth with Ward before he was injured.

Geelong's first innings: 1. Oxlade, 56; 2. Anderson, 40; 3. Ward, 40; 4. Procter, 30; 5. Statham, 20; 6. Loader, 10; 7. Ashley, 10; 8. Tyson, 10; 9. Statham, 10; 10. Loader, 10; 11. Ashley, 10; 12. Tyson, 10; 13. Statham, 10; 14. Loader, 10; 15. Ashley, 10; 16. Tyson, 10; 17. Statham, 10; 18. Loader, 10; 19. Ashley, 10; 20. Tyson, 10; 21. Statham, 10; 22. Loader, 10; 23. Ashley, 10; 24. Tyson, 10; 25. Statham, 10; 26. Loader, 10; 27. Ashley, 10; 28. Tyson, 10; 29. Statham, 10; 30. Loader, 10; 31. Ashley, 10; 32. Tyson, 10; 33. Statham, 10; 34. Loader, 10; 35. Ashley, 10; 36. Tyson, 10; 37. Statham, 10; 38. Loader, 10; 39. Ashley, 10; 40. Tyson, 10; 41. Statham, 10; 42. Loader, 10; 43. Ashley, 10; 44. Tyson, 10; 45. Statham, 10; 46. Loader, 10; 47. Ashley, 10; 48. Tyson, 10; 49. Statham, 10; 50. Loader, 10; 51. Ashley, 10; 52. Tyson, 10; 53. Statham, 10; 54. Loader, 10; 55. Ashley, 10; 56. Tyson, 10; 57. Statham, 10; 58. Loader, 10; 59. Ashley, 10; 60. Tyson, 10; 61. Statham, 10; 62. 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How the American approach to the Middle East will change under the new administration

Mr Reagan's goodies and baddies

The Reagan style is to be tough, determined, even aggressive, and Dr Kissinger's present function is to give an impression of purpose...



Dr Kissinger, forecasting a "higher United States profile".

In the region could merely provoke the Soviet Union into stepping up its forces in response. Any president has to

with the need for guaranteed oil supplies. It is clearly in the American interest to cultivate friendship with a range of Arab states, and to maintain arms supplies to countries such as Saudi Arabia, especially after the loss of Iran as a bastion of United States influence in the Gulf.

A further complication is that although the Reagan administration is committed to making Camp David work, there is no obvious way forward at the moment. The option most favoured is one which brings Jordan into the peace process.

The sharp divisions in the Arab world over the Gulf War have made this a more likely development than previously by creating a Jordanian-Israeli alliance with powerful resources and a desire to make history. Mr Reagan has described Jordan as "the key to a Middle East settlement", which suggests that he approves of King Hussein's rumoured plan for a transitional Jordanian-Israeli federation on the West Bank leading to Palestinian self-determination.

The main stumbling block is the Palestine Liberation Organisation. No Israeli government-

not even a Labour one, should Mr Begin lose this year's general election—can deal openly with the PLO. It may be that the "initiative" of the EEC Venice summit last June, will eventually provide a formula for the inclusion of the PLO in peace talks on terms acceptable to the United States.

On the other hand, if Dr Kissinger's attack in Jerusalem on European interference in the Middle East is any thing to go by, the Americans under Mr Reagan are likely to be just as suspicious of European "initiatives" as they have been under Mr Carter. Mr Alexander Haig (assuming he survives his forthcoming grilling by the Senate) is a man whose views on the Middle East are close to those of the President-elect. Mr Haig told the Zionist Organisation in America in 1979 that the United States must never recognize or negotiate with the PLO "as long as it advocates views incompatible with the peace process."

Mr Reagan—more bluntly—described the PLO during the election campaign as "a bunch of thugs clever enough to get the word liberation into their name" who had gained fame (or notoriety) by "murdering children". Last part of this campaign rhetoric aimed at the Jewish vote. But it was also heartfelt, and not at all untypical or unrepresentative of the style many Americans want and expect from their new leader.

Richard Owen

Can Lord Carrington win on all fronts in '81?

How delightful to meet Lord Carrington! (Everyone wants to know this.) With his features of aristocratic cut, And his hopes so high, And his jokes so spry, And his conversation, so lively, Restricted to What Precisely And If and Perhaps and But, (with apologies to T. S. Eliot)

If there is one senior member of the government from whom things seemed to go right in 1980 and for whom the new year brings prospect of continuing success it is the Foreign Secretary. It is something of a paradox, because as any television viewer can hardly fail to be aware, the world became a much worse place last year, and there is little or no sign of it becoming better this year.

But the point about foreign policy is that it thrives on adversity. Lord Carrington himself would not put it quite that way. One of the problems of being Foreign Secretary these days is that there is so little time to think. Everything that happens, from the Foreign Office's energies are mainly directed to reacting to events—the invasion of Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq war, the threat to Poland.

Lord Carrington has had his share of the most notable, of course, being the constitutional settlement and ceasefire which led to elections in Zimbabwe. It was fortunate indeed that this triumph (as it turned out) came at the start of his tenure at the Foreign Office, for it has certainly set the imprimatur of British diplomacy of getting results.

At a time when the art of conducting foreign policy lies to a large extent in making British influence felt without the means—military or economic—to back it in other words running diplomacy on a shoestring, the settlement in Zimbabwe has ensured Britain is taken seriously.

It was, all the same, a great relief to the good lord, as Mr Mugabe used sarcastically to refer to him, in the days before guerrilla hostility so suddenly blossomed into comradeship, to turn away from southern Africa, and look at the wider world.

In the past year Lord Carrington went to Turkey, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and India (January), Bonn, Romania, Malaysia, Singapore (February, March), Portugal, Salisbury (April), Washington, Vienna, Venice (EEC) and Ankara (Nato) (May, June), Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, Mexico, Sweden, Finland, Saudi Arabia (July, August), and so on through the rest of the year, plus some 20 EEC meetings abroad.

The other principal achievement of the past year, besides Zimbabwe's independence, was sorting out Britain's contribution to the EEC budget. This most troublesome and politically sensitive question occupied far too big a slice of the Foreign Secretary's time. Now that it is out of the way, there is a good chance, for the first time, of playing a constructive role in the Community, instead of hollow laughter off stage in Paris and Bonn.

In reality, this is a prime objective of domestic policy in 1981. Unless the EEC is seen by the British public as a really worthwhile and beneficial part of British life, opinion will never round to supporting it. Lord Carrington wants to "get results". As Britain is in the chair in the second half of the year, there is a chance of giving a lead. The trouble is that however much good is done in the EEC, in the kind of unexciting, day-to-day cooperation which is what the economic community

is all about, it is a "no-win" situation. Along comes the farm price review, and either the farmers are angry or the consumers are up in arms, or both.

Probably the overriding objective of the new year, however, is the wider question of repairing Britain's relations with the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary have an early opportunity of meeting President Reagan in Washington at the end of February as the first European leaders to go there after he takes office. The great thing about the new administration, so officials in Whitehall believe, is that Britain and all the other allies, will be dealing with a President who knows where he stands. It is a point likely to be appreciated in Moscow, too.

The alliance faces two obvious challenges. One, that events in Afghanistan and the Gulf have shown that whatever the treaty may say, Nato's interests go far beyond its geographical limits. And two, managing the cost and effectiveness of defence with an American administration committed to higher spending.

On the Middle East, Lord Carrington is certainly following his own line in propounding so strongly the European "initiative" to draw the Palestine Liberation Organisation into the peace process. Whether the Europeans will get anywhere, and if so whether the PLO leadership will turn from guerrilla tactics (like Mr Mugabe) to statesmanship, are questions for the future.

For the time being it may be noted that Lord Carrington is badly upset by the Israelis. And it rather looks as if he is taking virtually the opposite approach from his tactics over Rhodesia, which were based on the principle, as he saw it, of making absolutely certain that he kept the confidence of the people he wanted to budge. Some earnest talking will be needed when Mr Shimon Peres comes to London.

Overall, Lord Carrington likes to make a practical approach to foreign policy. For instance, on the residual colonial problems of the Falkland Islands, Belize, and the proposals which may perhaps solve them in measurable time. Possibly the emphasis on the practical leads to errors of judgement, too. Popular support for the Brandt report and help to the Third World in general seems to have been underestimated. When commercial contracts and human rights pull in different directions, as in countries like Chile, the resulting compromise leaves a sense of unease.

There has not been much criticism on foreign affairs, a situation which may change with the arrival of the aggressive Mr Healey as Opposition spokesman. One of the consequences of being in the upper house is that the Foreign Secretary's performance leaves the cut and thrust of parliamentary debate to his junior ministers, while the deferential questioning he faces in Select Committee has been most of it, hardly trouble a 10-year-old.

Nineteen-eighty-one looks like being another very difficult year, in which Lord Carrington's energies will be fully stretched. He is an activist, he enjoys the job, his sense of humour is always close to the surface. No wonder everybody wants to meet him, as he jets around the globe.

David Spanier

Diplomatic Correspondent

The article "A new light on the Nativity" (December 24) stated that Jews could not go to school in pre-war Poland. That is incorrect.

Bernard Levin

How could I have doubted Hoffmann?

Where *The Tales of Hoffmann* is concerned, I have a bizarre psychological problem; I am under the extraordinary misapprehension that I don't like it, though in fact I do. Well, I might as well confess myself a great booby if I didn't; nevertheless, I almost invariably approach it with reluctance, convinced that I am bored by it, yet the moment the music starts I realize that I think it is one of the least boring operas in the repertoire, and indeed, that I always have thought as much. Only the fact that I saw it in Salzburg in August drove this curious myth from my mind while I was on my way to the new Covent Garden production; there had not been time for the earlier performance to fade from the memory, and for the first time I saw it for the first time I was eager to get to my seat. Perhaps I have unwittingly achieved that most desirable aesthetic Nirvana, the ability to forget a masterpiece that every performance of it has the effect of a first meeting. But if so, why only Hoffmann?

Well, never mind; I may be odd, but I am not so odd that I fail to see in *The Tales of Hoffmann* an extraordinary artistic accident from which sprang a rightly treasured work. The combination of Hoffmann and Offenbach is strange enough; the hated Bohemian, who drank himself to death at the age of 46, represented Romanticism at its most intense (for all that he was born in the year of the Declaration of Independence and the *Wealth of Nations*), yet provided the stories which enabled the Second Empire's greatest composer of operettas to finish his career in the year of *The Brothers Karamazov* by writing a masterpiece that transcended his limitations and compelled history to take him seriously at last. It was as if Beethoven had turned *The Good Soldier Schweik* into an opera with a libretto by Ibsen.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediment; if I did admit it, though, there would be an even bigger impediment than the sheer improbability of the genesis of *Hoffmann*. Offenbach died before he had completed the vocal score, let alone the orchestration, though nobody knows exactly what he had, and had not done, much less what he intended. Every version extant is corrupt in countless ways, and some malignant fate, probably conjured into being by the tormented shade of Hoffmann himself, has seen to it that most of the early evidence was destroyed by fire or drowned deep in a quagmire of copyright. No two productions use the same music all through, nor can any two producers agree on the ideal cast of the work; for a century, opera-houses all over the world have

been running through the permutations, and have nowhere near exhausted them yet. But the moment the overture begins, I stop thinking how unlikely it is that Offenbach intended it to sound like that I cease to care what cuts will have been made in what follows, or what normally unperformed matter will have been inserted on this occasion, I no longer even wonder whether we shall have Gioietta before Antonia or vice versa, I am swept at once into the heart of the most perfect dream in all music, surrendering to its intoxication, accepting it on its own extravagant and impossible terms, falling—no, eagerly throwing myself—under the most potent spell in all opera.

I have seen some exceptionally fine Hoffmanns in my time, but 1980 was assuredly my Hoff-

mannic *annus mirabilis*. After the Salzburg production by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, which I think one of the most imaginative and beautiful operatic misuses-of-acts of my time, I could not see how John Schlesinger's Covent Garden version could be anything but a disappointment, and so it would have been if Mr Schlesinger had tried to achieve the same effect as Ponnelle. But of course he didn't: why should he? His production, though less spectacular, was more interesting and coherent, a dark, almost bitter, reading that could fairly be described as more Hoffmann than Offenbach, whereas Ponnelle's fragile fairy-tale was decidedly the other way round. The double experience within a few months was a forceful reminder of the inextinguishability of works like this: neither Ponnelle nor Schlesinger took

any unseemly liberties with the opera, and their versions were strikingly different, yet no one could deny that everything both directors had found in the opera was certainly there before they set to work on it.

But what made the comparison of these two memorable versions so much more exciting than the usual study of similarities and differences among productions was that the Hoffmann in both of them was Plácido Domingo, the well-known golfer. (If you saw that television programme, to which he was soundly thrashed from the first hole to the eighteenth by the Divine Songbird—Kiri is as skilled a performer with the 5 iron as she is with the epiglottis, though she was modest enough to admit that she couldn't have done it without her caddy—then came to the conclusion that he ought to

stick to singing, you should have seen him out there, were times when the sound engineer had to turn his recording machine off completely, because he was being deafened by the noise of the members of West-ward Golf Club shouting themselves at the sight of what Plácido was doing to their precious course: it was not so much golfing as opencast mining.)

I know such statements are meaningless, but I cannot help thinking that it is true: surely, he is the greatest lyric tenor now living. Even Pavarotti seems to me, for all the caressing beauty of his voice, to lack the drama that Domingo's adds, and there is a firmness of the line running through it, like a steel cable, exposed in soft intonation, that gives it a quality I have rarely heard since. Patazki (a most portable Hoffmann in his day, incidentally— which reminds me that it is high time Domingo sang Florestan).

The other principal achievement of the past year, besides Zimbabwe's independence, was sorting out Britain's contribution to the EEC budget. This most troublesome and politically sensitive question occupied far too big a slice of the Foreign Secretary's time. Now that it is out of the way, there is a good chance, for the first time, of playing a constructive role in the Community, instead of hollow laughter off stage in Paris and Bonn.

In reality, this is a prime objective of domestic policy in 1981. Unless the EEC is seen by the British public as a really worthwhile and beneficial part of British life, opinion will never round to supporting it. Lord Carrington wants to "get results". As Britain is in the chair in the second half of the year, there is a chance of giving a lead. The trouble is that however much good is done in the EEC, in the kind of unexciting, day-to-day cooperation which is what the economic community

current diary begins its weeks on Monday. After all, God started creating the world on a Monday, and so would MacAlpine if they'd been on the job.

The music critic of the Eastern Daily Press had only a few lines to complain in an otherwise glowing tribute to *Shereham* and *Cromer Choral Society's* Christmas performance of Handel's *Messiah*: "Due to illness, basses and tenors were thin, and it made a difference to their projection that they were not raised on the customary staging—lack of balance here sometimes made the soprano line sound a trifle aggressive." Sounds as though they were so ill they could hardly stand.

Standing orders Since his widely applauded decision three months ago to list 12 complete twentieth century buildings of historic or architectural interest, Michael Heseltine, the Environment Secretary, has been sitting on a much larger inventory of suggested additions.

I have now learned that a new batch is likely to be announced at the end of this month, and I understand that the candidates include three famous London hotels, the Dorchester, the Savoy and Claridges; some equally well known emporia like Barkers,

Alan Hamilton

LONDON DIARY

Low profile Leon in the firing line

One of the less expected cards which emerged at the top of the pile in Mrs Thatcher's frontbench reshuffle was Lord Brittan, whose parliamentary career to date has been chiefly marked by a talent for keeping his head down and avoiding any of those gaffs which make for a certain notoriety outside the House.

Now Chief Secretary to the Treasury Brittan, jet propelled from the comparative obscurity of a junior appointment in the Home Office, finds himself in charge of Government spending plans, with a special responsibility for the civil estimates. A personal friend of his new boss, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Brittan heard of his promotion on Monday night while celebrating his two-week-old marriage with a party in the Chancellor's official residence at 11 Downing Street.

After serving the usual apprenticeship in trying to wrest North Kensington from Labour, Brittan was elected by Cleveland and Whitby in 1974 and was brought on to the front bench by Mrs Thatcher two years later. He made a parliamentary name for himself in the long wrangles over devolution when he represented the Opposition on a complex issue which by no means united the party.

Ironically one of his early alliances in the House was with the now-deposed Norman St John-Stevens. They jointly wrote a guide on how to prevent schools going comprehensive and also got together on advising local authorities who were tardy in producing plans to go comprehensive.

The two have something else in common. Both were presidents of the Cambridge Union. St John-Stevens in 1952 and Brittan a decade later. Brittan, now 41, is by profession a barrister; he was called to the bar in 1962 and made a QC in 1978.

Quite a meteoric rise for a youngish lad, which must show that he is not wet behind the ears, nor anywhere else. If he needs any advice in his new post he can always call on his brother Samuel Brittan, the distinguished economic commentator of *The Financial Times*, who for years has been one of the most dedicated proponents of monetarism in print.

Burning issue A useful new service for the dead is about to be introduced by the Cremation Society of Great Britain, a body best described as the consumers' watchdog for that particular means of disposing of the mortal coil once it has been shuffled off. The society is to open a register of last requests, in which members can lodge precise details of what they want done with their earthly remains.

On payment of £10, any of the society's 8,000 members will be able to join the register and have their final instructions kept in a safe place by the society at its Maidstone headquarters. All they need do is leave a note for the next of kin saying: "Ring the Cremation Society now for full details." The £10 will be refunded to the deceased's estate after departure.

to slow down cremations to 30-minute intervals instead of the previous 20. Customers had been complaining of being hustled out to make way for the next service.

Elysian fields

Now for news of the more traditional transport to the hereafter. The grazing of sheep to keep country graveyards tidy at no cost to the church has been advocated by a leading ecclesiastical lawyer in an article in a diocesan newsletter.

George Newsom, QC, Chancellor of the dioceses of Bath and Wells, St Albans and London, thinks grazing probably fell out of favour because the church was accused of being a leading ecclesiastical lawyer in an article in a diocesan newsletter.



grass flourished and the general appearance improved. "The time has come seriously to consider the reintroduction of sheep", says Newsom.

Dazed

Which, I and a number of my readers would like to know, is the first day of the week? Leaving through a crop of 1981 diaries I am somewhat perplexed to find that in most cases the week begins, not on Sunday, traditionally and biblically the first day of the week, as celebrated by Christians in

commemoration of the Resurrection, but on Monday. Starting the week on what they regard as its second day has irritated such organizations as the Lord's Day Observance Society, which has often complained to publishers that their diaries are inaccurate; indeed some diaries would even regard them as blasphemous.

The fault appears to lie with Mammion. Most diaries now follow the business timetable with its Monday start. "We are really conforming to the popular conception of the week," I was told by Mrs Kay Barr, senior editor at Collins, a firm whose foundations lie in printing Bibles in Glasgow. Since last century Collins diaries have generally started the week on Monday except for a period between 1960 and 1973 when, after complaints from religious bodies, they opted for Sunday.

But that proved unpopular and they reverted to Monday with the moral support of the British Standards Institution which in 1971 ruled that Monday was the start of the commercial week. Charles Letts, the other big diary publisher, told me they have had threats from religious groups, but their policy is to start the week when ever the customer wants; they have both Sunday and Monday diaries.

Collins attempted to placate the opposition by producing a diary called *Sunday Start*. They have also taken some quiet satisfaction from the discovery that the Church of Scotland's

graduates of London University who are contesting the nomination of Princess Anne as their new Chancellor might care to recall a report in this very space 10 years ago. The Princess was asked by a BBC interviewer why she did not go to university. "I think it's a very much over-rated pastime," she replied. The Palace disapproved of the observation, and it was excised from the broadcast version.

While on this subject, I must commend the admirable conservation group, Save Britain's Heritage, for having produced a complete catalogue of all Grade I listed buildings in Britain, something which the Government ought to do but never has. (*The Best Buildings in Britain*, Save Britain's Heritage, 3 Finsbury Square, West London NW1, £5.50.)

I can hardly resist pointing out that no fewer than 18 columns are devoted to Edinburgh as against mere 10 for the whole of London and a miserly two for Bath.

Alan Hamilton



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A POOR DAY FOR AUTHORS

One of the most difficult tasks for any Prime Minister in a Cabinet reshuffle is to choose which ministers to drop. This can be a particularly delicate decision because quite often those most easily spared from the Cabinet would present the greatest threat if left to nurse their grievances on the backbenches. Mrs Thatcher would probably have liked to have got rid of quite a few of her Cabinet colleagues with whom she is not in tune, but she has contented herself with the departure of Mr Norman St John-Stevas and Mr Angus Maude, thus executing at one stroke fifty per cent of the Cabinet's contribution to literature.

The dropping of Mr Maude is no surprise. It is justified on grounds both of age and of impact. Mr St John-Stevas presents a different case. He may not have carried quite the weight that the Leader of the House should, either with the Prime Minister personally or with the Cabinet collectively. His principal difficulties have occurred when he has been forced to present proposals to the House against his better judgment. But he leaves behind a notable record of achievement both in that office and as a sympathetic and imaginative Minister for the Arts.

As Leader of the House he was responsible for piloting through Parliament last session an especially, indeed an excessively, heavy programme of legislation. But his record of office deserves to be remembered in particular for the new system of select committees in the Commons. The Conservatives were committed before they came to power to do something in this field. But there was no enthusiasm among most Cabinet members for any substantive move in this direction once they had taken office. Yet Mr St John-Stevas managed not only to have the new committees set up but also subsequently to take steps to enlarge their role. The

reform has not been taken as far as it should. But it is to Mr St John-Stevas's credit that it has been taken as far as it has. His departure is a loss to the Cabinet.

There is at least a question mark over each of the consequential changes that follows from the removal of these two ministers. Mr Francis Pym takes over Mr St John-Stevas's role as Leader of the House and Mr Maude's as the minister responsible for government information and propaganda. He is well fitted for each of these tasks, but nobody should combine the two.

Some twenty years ago Mr Iain Macleod found how difficult it was to operate both as Leader of the House and as party chairman. The Leader of the House is not only responsible for steering through the Government's legislative programme; he also has to be especially sensitive to the interests of the Commons as a whole. He therefore needs to be one of the least partisan of ministers in terms of personal style. The chairman of the party, by contrast, has to be a spirited partisan. One person can hardly be both at the same time, and Mr Pym will find it equally difficult to be both Leader of the House and the Government's cheerleader.

Mr John Nott, who takes Mr Pym's place as Secretary of State for Defence, will bring to this office a strong sense of the need for economy. Mrs Thatcher may find this congenial after Mr Pym's vigorous resistance to slashing the department's budget. But an administration with Mrs Thatcher's foreign policy cannot have defence on a shoestring if it is not to appear inconsistent, or even hypocritical.

It would be reasonable for Mr Nott to reexamine the Government's commitment to Trident because it would be extremely damaging to Britain's total defence effort for the country's conventional forces to be run down in order to pay for ex-

pensive a nuclear capability. But a sweeping attack on defence expenditure would not be in the national interest. Mr Nott is not experienced in foreign or defence policy and it would be most unfortunate both for Britain's own defence operations and for the country's standing in Nato if he were to insist on draconian economies without adequate study of the subject.

Mr Nott's place at the Department of Trade will be taken by Mr John Biffen, whose independence of mind makes him a valuable member of the Cabinet but who is difficult to place in the right post. There are some doubts as to whether his talents are best suited to running a major department. That will now be tested over the coming months.

His replacement as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Mr Leon Brittan, is a minister of considerable potential whose entry to the Cabinet is well deserved. His brother is the distinguished economist Mr Samuel Brittan. As Chief Secretary he may display tougher debating skills and a less sympathetic ear to the reasoning of the spending ministers than Mr Biffen did. Yet both the Treasury ministers in the Cabinet will now be lawyers—three, if one stretches a point, and includes the Prime Minister himself—and experience suggests that politicians with a legal background are not at their best in managing the economy. It is difficult to think like a political economist if you have been trained to think like a lawyer.

Altogether, then, there must be doubts as to whether the Cabinet as a whole has been strengthened by these changes; however much respect one may have for some of the ministers involved. Below Cabinet level, though, Mrs Thatcher has taken the opportunity to bring some promising members into the Government, which is not the least of the responsibilities of a Prime Minister.

First principle of justice

From Lord Rawlinson of Ewell, QC
Sir, Once upon a time there was an old British principle that a man was presumed innocent until proven guilty. And once upon a time it was believed that the greater the accusation the greater the need to remember the principle. I am glad that you, Sir, at any rate, remain loyal to such old-fashioned ideas.

Yours faithfully,
RAWLINSON,
12 King's Bench Walk,
Temple, EC4.
January 6.

Police press passes

From Mr Peter Nevins
Sir, Mr Ecclesstone (January 6) is being less than frank in his letter about police press passes.

The Metropolitan Police are anxious to be as helpful as possible to the press but in operational situations it is often impossible to allow unrestricted access to everyone.

In 1972, all Fleet Street editors attended a meeting at New Scotland Yard where it was agreed that the press should be given a card issued by the Metropolitan and City Police Forces would be made available on request from editors. There are presently something in the region of 3,000 cards held by London-based journalists.

There is absolutely no question of our passing being "licences" to practise the art of news gathering and the Commissioner fully accepts the important role of a free press in a democracy. That is why he operates an open door policy with the news media.

Metropolitan Police officers are required to acknowledge any other accredited press pass within the constraints of the police operation and the NUJ card would conform with these instructions.

Yours faithfully,
PETER NEVINS, Deputy
Assistant Commissioner,
Director of Information,
New Scotland Yard,
Broadway, SW1.
January 6.

Picasso's 'Guernica'

From Mr Douglas Cooper
Sir, I write as a member of the Real Patronato (Board of Trustees) of the Museo del Prado to express astonishment at the article by David Mitchell (December 11) on the future of the painting 'Guernica' by Picasso.

Picasso never declared that this painting "belonged to the Spanish people", nor did he stipulate "that it should be housed in the Prado". His instruction to his heirs were that it should be handed over to the Spanish Government in office (since the original commission came from a democratically constituted Government) once Spain has again become a democracy.

When all of his heirs have signed the release of the painting from New York, where it is held in trust for the Spanish Government, it will be handed over. Most probably, this will occur in the first half of 1981, and the recipient will be the Government of Spain then in power. The picture will then be entrusted to the Museo del Prado for safekeeping and exhibition. The place where it will hang has been selected and agreed, the necessary technical and security precautions decided on. 'Guernica' will go neither to Malaga, nor to Guernica, nor to Barcelona. Your correspondent's arguments are fallacious and unfounded.

Sincerely yours,
DOUGLAS COOPER,
Monte-Carlo Star, Apt 151,
15 Boulevard Louis II,
Monte-Carlo,
Monaco.

Dangerous council?

From Sir Ralph Richardson
Sir, The Arts Council has decided to cut off financial support to the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain. This would be a dangerous precedent if it were to be followed, as it would cut off a valuable young tree in the orchard of our culture.

Only last year, when the company visited the United States, the *New Yorker* declared: "It presents the best kind of English acting still in the making." The company has been asked to return this year.

Our theatre is valuable to us all; we must not damage it. The National Youth Theatre's founder and director, Michael Croft, is unique in our time. We must not cut off that head.

We must think. We have until Easter before we come to the dangerous corner when the £15,000 grant will be stopped.

Whereas comes wiser council?
Yours faithfully,
RALPH RICHARDSON,
(President, National Youth Theatre of Great Britain),
1 Chester Terrace,
Regent's Park, NW1.

The value of music

From Mr Larry Westland
Sir, Since my letter (December 27), I have received a very reassuring letter from the Chief Education Officer of Surrey County Council. It informs me that at a recent meeting of the council members expressed the view that they did not wish to cease instrumental tuition and assistance to orchestras. Instead, they have asked that the possibility of achieving economies by increasing income and by restructuring the peripatetic music services should be explored.

The latter concludes with the reassurance that, although there will need to be economies, it is hoped that instrumental music tuition, perhaps in a modified form, and the orchestras will be retained.

We at the National Festival of Music for Youth applaud the Surrey County Council for its continued support for music education.

Yours faithfully,
LARRY WESTLAND,
Festival Director,
National Festival of Music
and Youth,
23a King's Road, SW3.
January 5.

What is happening in Afghanistan?

From Professor Louis Dupree

Sir, In the past weeks a lot of twaddle (and some significant non-twaddle) has been published in this and other newspapers concerning the war in Afghanistan. May I be permitted to seek out the middle ground on several of the issues—based on 30 years' experience in the area?

The lack of unity between the various guerrilla factions, particularly those centred in Peshawar, Pakistan, dismays many observers. Unity among the diverse Afghan ethnic groups (or even within the groups, however) has never been the normal cultural pattern. In addition, the views of the six major religious leaders in Peshawar range from the ultra-conservative fundamentalist Islamic Engineer Gulbuddin Hekmatyar to the moderate, secular-oriented philosophy of Sayyid Ahmad Gailani, a member of the important Naqib religious family. The others (Sebratullah Mojaddi, Mas'ud Mohammad Yusuf Khaila, Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, Maulvi Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi) fall somewhere in between. And these are not the only groups in Peshawar. At one time more than 30 existed!

Currently, four major struggles are taking place in and around Afghanistan:

1. The generalized, relatively uncoordinated attempts of the mujahideen (freedom fighters) to overthrow the puppet regime of Babrak Karmal and drive the Soviets out of their country.
2. The internal struggle for power between the two major factions of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (Parcham, The Banner, now in power; Khalq, The Masses, now in opposition).
3. The infighting for headlines, followers and Arab money by the religious leaders in Peshawar.
4. The gradual unification of regionally orientated ethno-linguistic groups inside Afghanistan.

No 4 is the most important and crucial part of the evolution of a national liberation movement. This does not minimize the importance of the various religious leaders and their followers in Peshawar (particularly the moderate Gailani), but simply tries to put the matter in proper perspective, at least on a point of view.

A year after their invasion of Afghanistan the Russians find themselves involved in an expensive stalemate. In my opinion, the Soviets originally planned a Dom-

nican Republic-type operation: Come in, zap the government in power, replace it with a puppet, and then leave. The Russians miscalculated, for the Afghans have never peacefully accepted subjugation and have always resisted outsiders.

So the Russians failed to crush the mujahideen. Now the Soviet tactics involve two interlocking processes: the russification of the countryside and migratory genocide. The much vaunted Mi-24 armoured helicopter gunships roam up valleys with impunity, turning villages into mud-brick rubble with bombs, rockets and cannonfire. The object appears to be to drive Afghans out of their country into Pakistan and Iran, not to kill them.

But the fact that whole valleys have been denuded of people has worked against the Russians, and new patterns are emerging in the countryside. Guerrilla leaders, their villages destroyed, have settled their families in Pakistan and returned to their home areas to continue the fight. Because they no longer have to worry about the safety of their families or the sanctity of their villages, groups can coalesce into larger units and wage more widely expanding zones of responsibility. Regionally, even different ethno-linguistic groups have joined together to resist the Russians.

The invasion of Afghanistan is the first Russian aggression since World War II—on a piece of virgin, independent, non-aligned real estate. (Hungary and Czechoslovakia were considered by Nato to be in the Soviet zone of influence.) The Afghan freedom fighters have made it abundantly clear that they do not want, nor do they need, foreign troops, mercenaries or otherwise. Probably, the only way to force the Russians to the negotiating table, however, is to make their aggression in Afghanistan expensive in blood and machines.

Therefore, I believe the time has come for the United States, the United Kingdom and other interested nations to supply the mujahideen with adequate weapons. The Afghans do not lack courage. They lack weapons. The Americans and others have the weapons, but do they have the courage? Yours etc., LOUIS DUPREE, American Universities Field Staff, The Wheelock House, PO Box 150, Hanover, New Hampshire, December 18.

Water cure for transport problem

From the Chairman of the British Waterways Board

Sir, I have a great respect for John Gagg's belief in waterways transport—I thought that the feeling was mutual. However his references in his letter (January 2) suggest that we who serve on the British Waterways Board are too sanguine about Government's approach to our commercial waterways.

Since 1965 I have been battered my head against a wall of seeming indifference in Whitehall. Although, in some circles, the decision to allow us to improve the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation (the first such improvement for 70 years) may be considered as a sop to dampen down the growing demands for a policy for our waterways, we don't see it that way.

My board see it as a "second innings" for the canals. We will be able to put up a decent score if we have the kind of support within the ministries as do the roads, the railways and the airports. I wish we ask (as would railways, I suspect) for an equal commitment in the corridors of power.

John Gagg is right when he says that our European colleagues look on our attitude with incredulity. Nowhere else in Europe do they ignore the energy savings and the environment bonus produced by waterways transport. They press for meaningful statistics which we are unable, or unwilling, to produce; they ask for competition between transport modes should be equal, which we ignore.

I know that there will come a day when someone capable of moulding government policy will take up the waterway case. Till then we will keep trying!

FRANK PRICE,
British Waterways Board,
Melbury House,
Melbury Terrace, NW1.
January 2.

Land of Palestine

From Mrs N. Silk

Sir, What a pity that you seem (leading article, December 23) to vitiate the compassionate significance of Robert Frost's article on the Palestinians by implying that the latter are not unique and should accept their fate like other refugees.

But surely they are unique. Where else in the world did the majority of a country's population become dispossessed exiles? Where else did the United Nations (under American pressure) partition a country in defiance of the rights and wishes of its indigenous majority? Where else did such partition award nearly 60 per cent of the land to the minority, who then owned less than 10 per cent of that land?

Surely the world community owes some late measure of justice to the Palestinians, for whose fate it has largely been responsible.

Yours faithfully,
N. SILK,
22 Spring Gardens,
Dorking,
Surrey,
December 23.

Trees for energy

From Mr James Blewitt

Sir, I have just pollarded for the first time oak trees planted as acorns 15 years ago. By the time oil gives out I hope my house will be heated from the trees I have grown and am continuing to plant in those areas where the energy equation is beginning to turn against yearly cultivation.

This line of thought is now commonplace among farmers. I would, though, like to emphasize that oaks are easy to raise from acorns, easy to transplant, determined to grow quicker to achieve a rotatable size than is generally thought (one 26-year-old tree is now 30 ft high) and most rewarding in every way.

Yours sincerely,
JAMES BLEWITT,
Pomfret Hall,
Colchester,
Essex,
January 5.

Pillars of society

From Mrs C. A. Crowe

Sir, Your Architectural Correspondent, Charles McKean, in his article, "They have the pillars and their entrances" (December 29), refers only briefly to domestic doorways and prompts me to ask if he has noticed the alarming epidemic of white pillars which is now sweeping the country.

I personally have seen outbreaks in Yorkshire mining villages, Lake District hamlets, Midlands suburbs, West Country seaports and the Welsh valleys. Nowhere seems to be immune. Moreover, pillars are not confined to detached residences and the semi, for even terraced display affected areas, albeit of the fluff-fitting variety.

The first symptom of a fresh case is usually the sudden appearance of a new front door. This may be baroque in style and multi-panned, neo-Tudor with black hinges, Georgian with faience, mock-Gothic with stained glass, early-Odeon and chrome-embellished.

Within days, pillars will appear, sometimes in pairs, more often in sets of four. In more extreme cases they will spread along the entire frontage and encompass the car port and, in the severest attacks of all, they have been known to invade the patio itself.

What does it all mean? Could it be that the people of these islands in the face of adversity are symbolically propping up the fabric of their existence? Enlighten us, Mr McKean, so we may know just what is happening before the contagion is unstoppable and every street becomes a colonnade.

Yours faithfully,
C. A. CROWE,
Tanglewood,
Stoney Lane,
Tickhill,
Doncaster.
December 30.

THE RIGHT TO FAIR TRIAL

The press and television has little to be proud of in its treatment of the arrest and subsequent charge for murder of Mr Surcliffe. Rarely in modern times can the media in general have acted with such disregard for the law and the fundamental tenets of British justice. In 1949, the editor of the *Daily Mirror* was committed to prison for three months and the newspaper fined £10,000 for saying that the police had caught the person responsible for the notorious acid-bath murders. Some articles within the last two days have gone nearly as far.

The police are partly at fault. It was unnecessary for them to have held a press conference at all. It was irresponsible for them to have done so in the way they did. They announced that inquiries into the Ripper murders were being immediately scaled down; that they were "absolutely delighted" about developments; they praised the two young policemen who had carried out the arrest, and those officers in which they professed their own satisfaction. The police did not quite go as far as saying that they had caught the Ripper. They did not need to. It is understandable that the police, who have been much criticized over the past few years for their apparent lack of progress in solving the Ripper murders, should want to publicize what they regarded as a success. Their enthusiasm unhappily exceeded their sense of duty to the administration of justice.

Even more seriously, perhaps, members of the police must have told representatives of the media details of evidence which would almost certainly form part of the prosecution case. There is no other source from which some of the information published in some newspapers could have come. Such disclosures clearly add to the potential prejudice of a fair trial. The police should

now inquire into how certain facts came into the hands of the media, and take action against any policeman found to have been providing the prejudicial details for publication, or any non-senior policeman who authorized it.

Police conduct does not, however, exonerate the media. It has been argued that in the period between the police press conference and the appearance of the accused in court the following afternoon, the law did not clearly spell out the risk of contempt in which the media might become subject. The existing test is that contempt starts to run from the time when a charge is imminent, and it is true that in many circumstances that moment is difficult to define. In this case, however, the police made it clear that a suspect was shortly to be charged. The press could not have been in much doubt about imminence. Nevertheless, one newspaper at least published a photograph of the accused, when it must have known that there was a strong possibility that identification would be in issue at the trial.

The contempts continued even when the excuse that the law was unclear could no longer be argued. The statutory restrictions on reporting the proceedings at the magistrate's court were breached, not technically or marginally, but substantially and deliberately. On Monday evening's television and in many of yesterday's newspapers, there appeared extensive interviews with prostitutes, including the particular lady who claimed to have been in the company of the accused when he was apprehended, members of the accused's family, his neighbours, his employers and work-mates. The overwhelming effect of the coverage of most papers, and of the television news programme, was to enhance the assumption, already implied by the police, that the man charged was guilty.

Various border issues between the two countries, particularly that of the illegal Mexican immigrants to the United States. As for Central America, the Mexicans are as worried as anyone at the prospect of a tide of revolution; it could, after all, affect Mexico itself, which has great disparities of wealth but where there is tight control over dissent. But the Mexican approach is to recognize that change is coming and to keep on good terms with the revolutionaries, as they have always done with Cuba and are doing now with Nicaragua. They are opposed to further American intervention both on ideological grounds, based on their own experience, and on practical grounds, in the belief that it would only exacerbate the situation—and ultimately bring about the sort of revolution it was designed to stop. It is a sensible approach, and far more sensible than the simplicities uttered at times by Mr Reagan. If it deters him from ill-considered action in Central America, that alone will have made his trip to Ciudad Juarez worth while.

MR REAGAN GOES TO MEXICO

It was significant that even before his inauguration as President Mr Reagan should make a point of meeting President Lopez Portillo of Mexico. As a Californian, Mr Reagan is more aware than most Americans of the proximity of Mexico; and before the election he had made a broad proposal, not at all well received in Mexico, for a North American common market including the United States, Canada and Mexico. But more than that, Monday's meeting in Ciudad Juarez was indicative of the increasing attention being paid in the United States to their southern neighbour, and to the small Central American states beyond.

The interest in Mexico is due to the large discoveries of oil and gas that have been made in recent years, making Mexico one of the world's main oil exporters and giving it greater confidence in international affairs. More than half of these oil exports go to the United States, which obviously has every interest in making the most of such a convenient source of supply. The

attention being paid to Central America stems from the realization that that area, so long regarded as part of the American backyard, is in turmoil, with a recent revolution in Nicaragua, a virtual civil war in El Salvador, and constant political killings in Guatemala. The Americans would dearly like Mexican help in containing the upheavals, and avoiding Cuban intervention.

Things are seen differently in Mexico, however. Mexican perceptions start from the principle that the main threat to the region comes from the United States. They remain bitterly aware that they lost a large part of their own territory to the Americans in the last century, and though American interests are strongly entrenched in Mexico the Mexicans are very sensitive to anything which seems like an attempt at encroachment, economic or political. They are acutely aware that the Americans have their eyes on Mexican oil, but feel that at last they have a real bargaining card in their dealings with Washington. In exchange they want better treatment in the

various border issues between the two countries, particularly that of the illegal Mexican immigrants to the United States.

As for Central America, the Mexicans are as worried as anyone at the prospect of a tide of revolution; it could, after all, affect Mexico itself, which has great disparities of wealth but where there is tight control over dissent. But the Mexican approach is to recognize that change is coming and to keep on good terms with the revolutionaries, as they have always done with Cuba and are doing now with Nicaragua. They are opposed to further American intervention both on ideological grounds, based on their own experience, and on practical grounds, in the belief that it would only exacerbate the situation—and ultimately bring about the sort of revolution it was designed to stop. It is a sensible approach, and far more sensible than the simplicities uttered at times by Mr Reagan. If it deters him from ill-considered action in Central America, that alone will have made his trip to Ciudad Juarez worth while.

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

هكذا من الأصل

Little cheer
in the
high street,
page 15

LAING
make ideas take shape

Stock markets

FT Ind 476.6, down 5.3
FT 692.0, up 0.19

Sterling

\$2.4255, up 140 points
Index 79.0, up 0.2

Dollar

Index 85.2, down 0.1
DM 1.9325, down 50 pts

Gold

\$601.50, up \$2

Money

3 mth sterling 14 1/4-14 1/2
3 mth Euro \$ 16 1/4-16 1/2
6 mth Euro \$ 15 1/4-15 1/2

IN BRIEF

Union backs BSC job losses and closures

British Steel Corporation last night secured the support of the National Union of Blastfurnacemen to the corporation's survival plan involving plant closures and further loss of jobs.

The NUB, with an estimated 6,000 members employed by the BSC, is the first union formally to sign an agreement supporting the main proposals of the plan drawn up by Mr Ian MacGregor, the corporation's chairman, and now with Sir Keith Joseph, the industry Secretary.

Blastfurnacemen's leaders, in accepting the main proposals of the plan, have agreed to defer a 10 per cent wage increase offered to all BSC unions to June 28 this year.

Craft industry unions and white collar workers who are members of the Steel Industry Management Association are expected formally to accept the plan, and will be further talks with the BSC over the next 10 days.

Liquidation warning, page 14

Portals 29m issue

Portals, Holdings, the bank-note printer and engineer, in which the Bank of England has nearly 29 per cent stake is raising £8.75m after expected share issue of convertible loan stock to rights to shareholders. The group wants to expand in the United States.

Financial Editor, page 15

Appeal dismissed

The Singapore court of appeal has dismissed an appeal by Mr Richard Turling against convictions last year for violations of local company law in the Haw Par affair. Mr Turling has already completed a six month jail sentence originally imposed.

Dumping alleged

European Commission officials have opened an anti-dumping inquiry into imports of textured polyester fabrics from the United States. The inquiry follows complaints from Community producers that American fabrics are selling at below cost.

Heading for a trade war? page 15

Massey meetings

Meetings between Massey-Ferguson's senior management and the company's worldwide bank creditors will resume in London over the next few days, with a joint meeting representing about 250 lenders scheduled to start on January 15.

Chinese bonds rise

Prices of Chinese bonds reacted sharply yesterday on the stock market, with dealers taking the view that for the first time there was a real possibility of bondholders being repaid. Buyers were attracted to the larger outstanding issues.

Financial Editor, page 15

Buyer for Bamfords

A buyer, not yet named, has been found to take over the 100-year-old farm machinery company Bamfords of Utteter, Staffordshire, the liquidators say.

SDR rate movements

The SDR rate yesterday was 1.28628, while the ESDR was 0.530315.

Hopes of slackening in monetary growth with rise of only 0.5 pc last month

By John Whitmore
Financial Correspondent

Monetary growth slackened appreciably last month, lifting official hopes that expansion will show a marked slowdown over the final part of the financial year.

Preliminary estimates by the Bank of England put the growth in sterling M3, the broadly defined money supply, at about 0.5 per cent during the December banking month.

But though the figures represent a welcome improvement on the 2.1 per cent jump in November, they still need to be treated with caution because December is a odd banking month, lasting for only three weeks.

By contrast the January banking month, covering the six weeks from December 11 to January 21, will probably provide a far more significant set of figures. Indeed, they could be the figures that will determine whether the Government feels it can afford to make a further cut in interest rates ahead of the spring Budget.

At the moment the renewed upward pressure on sterling as dollar interest rates start to fall suggests that the Government could afford a further cut in

minimum lending rate on external considerations. But such factors alone are unlikely to prove decisive unless the present pressures on the exchange rate intensify further.

Although a 0.5 per cent rise in sterling M3 in December was better than financial markets had expected, there was some disappointment about the apparent composition of the monetary figures.

Whereas many analysts had been expecting to see another very low figure for the growth in bank lending to the private sector—bank lending to the private sector fell slightly in November—the London clearing banks yesterday suggested that they had seen an underlying rise of £400m in private sector lending in December.

This does not automatically mean that private sector credit demand is picking up again. More probably it may mean that earlier figures for sterling borrowing by the private sector were slightly understated overall.

Private sector credit demand because some companies may have chosen to borrow in dollars. Once dollar interest rates soared in the final months of last year, British borrowers may have switched back to sterling.

Not only would this explain the upturn in the banks' sterling lending to the private sector in December, but it would also fit in with the overall switching into sterling of bank balance sheets during the month—an offsetting contractionary movement in sterling M3 terms.

Contrary to market expectations, the public sector probably had no more than a neutral impact on domestic credit expansion in December. A further contractionary factor was another large increase in non-resident sterling deposits.

Although the slowdown in monetary growth will obviously be welcome news to the authorities, sterling M3 has grown by almost 20 per cent over the past 12 months and at an annual rate of about 22 per cent since February, the base date for the target 7-11 per cent target period.

Only if monetary growth between now and the end of the financial year was negligible would the authorities be able to put up a convincing case that the underlying growth rate in the 12 months to April was less than 15 per cent.

Financial Editor, page 15
Blighty's Liabilities table, page 16

Wall St at highest for four years

By Frances Williams

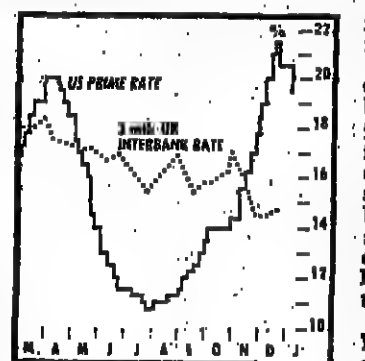
Wall Street closed above the 1,000 mark last night at its highest level for more than four years. Falling interest rates and heavy institutional demand for blue chips sent the Dow Jones industrial average 12.03 points higher to finish at 1004.69.

The downward movement in interest rates caused by further weakening of the dollar on the foreign exchange markets.

The Chemical Bank in New York cut its prime rate from 20.5 to 19.5 per cent, only an hour after Morgan Guaranty lowered its prime rate to 20 per cent. It joins Morgan Guaranty, which on Monday became the first major bank to cut its prime rate to 20 per cent. But most big banks have kept their rates at 20.5 per cent.

Sterling jumped sharply in early weeks after slipping back to close at \$2.4255, up 140 cents on the day and its highest level since early November.

The pound's trade-weighted



index opened at 79.3, up 0.5 on the previous day's close, but ended the day up 0.2 at 79.0.

Sterling closed at a lower rate in New York, finishing at \$2.4180/95 compared to the previous day's \$2.4245/55, and the dollar ended the day slightly firmer against most currencies after recovering from its earlier lows.

Its movements largely followed the trend in Eurodollar deposit rates, and the currency

rebounded in the afternoon as rates firmed slightly.

The foreign exchange markets conclude to take the view, on balance, that United States interest rates have further to fall, and the latest prime rate cut is a sign of this.

But a number of analysts believe that rates could rise again in the near future, in the expectation that President-elect Reagan will wish to pursue tough anti-inflation policies.

The pound's high opening levels reflected an overnight decline in the dollar in Far Eastern and American markets.

It declined on profit-taking, partly in anticipation of the United Kingdom bank lending figures published in the afternoon, and fell further when these suggested a lower money supply, increase in December.

Sterling is expected to remain firm in the near future as end-month corporate tax payments and the issue of gilts removes liquidity from the system and keep interest rates up.

Mail service set to miss cash target

By Bill Johnstone

The postal side of the Post Office looks set to miss its financial targets this year and Mr Ron Dearing, the chairman of Posts and Giro has been in talks with union general secretaries and advisers from the Post Office board in an attempt to find economies.

The target was set at two per cent on a turnover now expected to be about £2,000m this year. This was to have raised a large amount of the £40m needed for the proposed automation programme.

The achievement of the target is now in question and the increases in postal letter rates—expected to come into effect on January 26—will not be enough to offset the shortfall.

It is widely held that these increases will be too low to meet the corporation's ambitious programme. The programme has achieved a high level of acceptance over the past five years, but at present a first-class rate of 15p and a second class rate of 12p would be needed to fund it.

The original Post Office revenue-raising idea last year was for rises of 3p on first class mail, and 2p on second class letters.



Mr Ron Dearing: in talks to find economies.

The rates eventually discussed by the Post Office were 2p on both classes, but after negotiation with interested parties, it was agreed to increase the first class rate by 2p to 14p and raise the second class rate by only 1p to 11p.

This concession could prove to be a

serious error of judgment as nearly 60 per cent of the 10,000 million items handled each year travel second class.

The Post Office may have precipitated the problems itself by promising to freeze tariffs until the end of last year, thereby denying itself the possibility of increasing its income earlier. Users of the service were therefore expecting a fairly large increase early in 1981.

The Post Office Users National Council warned its members before Christmas that unless very great savings were made, there could be a second rise in the new year.

The report issued by the council also proposed an annual evaluation of the effect of productivity agreements on performance and quality of service to customers.

The prospects are not altogether bleak. The Post Office had a very successful Christmas employing 10,000 fewer casual workers in the London area alone, while handling virtually the same amount of mail as last year.

But if large scale economies cannot be made despite the savings, it is possible that the much-discussed mechanisation programme will be stopped again.

Fisons to close four works and cut 1,100 jobs in fertilizer division

By John Huxley

Fisons is to restructure its fertilizer business, with the loss of about 1,100 jobs—more than a quarter of the division's workforce.

Four small works are to be closed—at Barking, Essex, where 110 will be made redundant; at Plymouth, 120; at Bolton, Lancashire, 35; and at Widnes, Cheshire, 120. Phosphoric acid production at its Avonmouth plant is to end with a loss of 100 jobs.

A further 300 workers will be paid off at Celvaco, where the division's administrative services are being reorganized, and at Levington, near Ipswich, where research and development facilities are located. The balance of redundancies will be achieved by closing the Humberside, where the division operates the largest fertilizer complex in Europe.

Fisons, which employs 11,000 in the United Kingdom, said yesterday that it intended to transfer the bulk of its operations to a new company, Fisons Fertilizers, which will be owned by the union involved.

Mr David Warburton, national industrial officer of the General and Municipal Workers Union, said that there had been no consultation about the closures. "How can you talk to a company which abuses every agreement we have? I shall be advising our executive to give positive support to our members in defence of jobs."

In the half year ending in

June 1980, fertilizer sales were worth £98m, against £92m in the corresponding period of 1979. Profits almost doubled from £13,000 to £14m. However, the company says that the comparison is misleading, because 1979 figures were depressed by adverse factors including a lorry drivers' strike and a dock strike affecting Inmaningham. In 1978 the fertilizer business produced profits of £6.1m.

Sales during the past year have been generally poor, it is understood. Yesterday, the company blamed high interest rates for the unwillingness of farmers to buy in fertilizers out of season. Stocks too have remained high.

Fisons's main competitors in the fertilizer market are the Anglo-Dutch owned ICI, and ICI, from which it buys a sizeable proportion of the ammonia used in production. ICI has a highly advantageous long-term contract with British Gas for the fertilizer which it uses in ammonia production.

Kellogg jobs go: Kellogg, the breakfast cereal company, is to make 300 redundant at its Trafford Park, Manchester factory by the middle of April because of a £5.5m investment programme planned for the next two years.

New equipment would mean fewer jobs, but it was hoped that the redundancies would be achieved by early retirement and voluntary resignation.

IBM faces trade abuse charges in Brussels

From Peter Norman
Brussels, Jan 6

The European Commission has accused International Business Machines (IBM) of abusing its dominant position as a supplier of computing equipment within the Community.

It confirmed today that it had sent IBM headquarters in Armonk, New York, a letter on December 19 asking for details of alleged abuses under article 86 of the Treaty of Rome.

A spokesman refused to give any details of the Commission's complaints, arguing that it provided for IBM to use against the Brussels authorities if the dispute came to court. The Commission's letter, which is thought to be a weighty document, is a first shot in what could become a long campaign.

IBM has said it is confident that the rules of the EEC, and today confirmed that it would respond to the Commission's statement.

IBM has also months to answer the EEC's formal statement of objection to its business practices, whereupon the Commission will decide either to drop the case or proceed against what it considers to be abuses of the Community's free competition rules.

An investigation of IBM's business practices in Europe was started in July 1974 after eight rival computer companies had complained to Brussels. It is understood that the Commission has based its complaints on a study of IBM's business between 1974 and 1979.

IBM says that it has co-operated fully in the Commission's inquiry. It has been rather more forthcoming about the details of the Commission's complaints, saying that the objections relate to including minimum main memory in the pricing of certain processes, providing interface information to competitors and certain software issues.

According to IBM, some of the objections raised by the Commission are similar to claims that have already been initiated in the United States and resolved in its favour.

IBM is not the first multinational corporation to be taken to task by the Commission for alleged breaches of article 86.

Article 86 specifies that abuse of a dominant market position can consist of: 1. Directly or indirectly imposing unfair purchase or selling prices or other unfair trading conditions; 2. Limiting production, markets or technical development to the prejudice of consumers; 3. Applying dissimilar conditions to equivalent transactions with other trading parties, placing them at a competitive disadvantage; 4. Making the conclusion of contracts subject to acceptance by the other parties of supplementary obligations which, by their nature or according to commercial usage, have no connection with the subject of such contracts.

Southampton dry docks to shut

By Peter Hill
Industrial Editor

The ship repairing industry in Southampton faces extinction with the loss of 1,000 jobs after the decision by the British Transport Docks Board to close two dry docks in the port.

The two docks—the only ones on the south coast capable of handling large ocean going ships—have been operated by Vosper Shipbuilders, the British Shipbuilders' subsidiary.

Over the past few months discussions have been taking place between Sir Humphrey Browne, chairman of BTDB and Mr Robert Atkinson, chairman of BS, over financing of the loss-making dry docks.

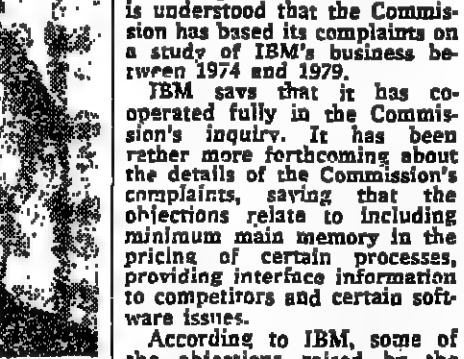
Provisional agreement for the docks to be transferred from the BTDB to BS was reached last year but the heavy losses being made by BS—likely to top £100m this year—have led the state shipbuilding corporation to withdraw planned contributions for £4.3m of the cost of maintenance and improvement of the two docks.

BS, which lost £10.3m on its shiprepair activities last year according to Vosper Shipbuilders, had planned to have talks with the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions on the need to restructure the Southampton operations but the BTDB decision to close the docks announced yesterday appears to have caught BS by surprise.

In a statement the state shipbuilding corporation, which is now attempting to hold-up operations but the BTDB said, "In the light of the decision by the BTDB to close the two docks,



Sir Humphrey Browne: chairman, British Transport Docks



Mr Robert Atkinson: chairman, British Shipbuilders

the situation has been dramatically altered and it is the intention, as a matter of extreme urgency to BS, to consult with the CSEU on the whole future of shiprepairing at Southampton.

Last year the BTDB overall operation at Southampton recorded a loss of £653,000, a large part of which was accounted for by losses sustained on the drydocks which it owns, caused by high maintenance and running costs.

The smaller of the two docks was opened 75 years ago and the larger King George V dock was designed and built to accommodate the Queen Mary, the former Cunard liner.

The board said that it could no longer continue to bear the heavy losses of dry docks and in the absence of any agreement from BS to meet the board's costs it had been decided to cease operations of the docks from December 31 last.

Provisional agreement for a transfer had been reached with BS last year, the BTDB said, but BS had indicated that it was unable to stand by that agreement and had declined to make any contribution to the losses incurred by the BTDB.

"The BTDB has explained to BS that they are unable to subsidise ship repairing operations, leaving it with no alternative than to discontinue the use of the dry docks," the BTDB said.

A spokesman for the board said that the option for BS to make some contribution towards the cost of the docks remained open.

Only a part of the Vosper Shiprepair workforce would be threatened immediately since dry docking is not essential for all the company's work, but clearly dock facilities are essential if the company is to attract business.

PAYE procedure changes

By Margaret Stone

The Inland Revenue is to simplify the procedures for employers operating the pay-as-you-earn system. The changes will take effect from tax year 1981-82.

Instead of sending out annual coding notices for each employee, the Revenue will send out notices only where the tax code has changed during the year. Employers will otherwise continue to use the previous code.

Changes are also to be made to the arrangements for handling the tax affairs of new employees. Form P46, used when employees start a new job without a P45, will allow the newcomer is a school leaver or is taking up an additional rather than principal job.

The rules relating to the issue of Form P60—the employee's certificate of pay and tax—are to be relaxed so that they can be issued before the end of the tax year. None of these changes will have any direct bearing on an individual's tax affairs.

In a separate statement the Inland Revenue announced yesterday that a draft order had been laid before both Houses of Parliament proposing to transfer the ecclesiastical records—records from the Revenue's custody to the Public Records Office.

Borthwick auditors qualify accounts

By Michael Prest

The accounts of Thomas Borthwick, Britain's biggest motor company which last year lost £10.5m, have been qualified by its auditors, Deloitte Haskins and Sells.

The accountants say that Borthwick's annual statement is presented as though the company is a going concern on the basis that it negotiates adequate borrowings. They add that in their judgment the company should have made a provision of £1.5m against the possibility of clawback of deferred tax relief.

The directors take the view that they are unlikely to make the payment.

Although Borthwick reduced total borrowings last year by £1m, its liabilities in the form of bank loans and overdrafts rose by over £1m to £42.3m.

In his annual statement Dr Bill Bullen, the company's departing chairman, says that it is hoped to further reduce the company's debt through stock reductions.

But Mr Richard Wheeler, Bennett, the deputy chairman who is to succeed Dr Bullen at the end of this month, said last night that the company was in urgent negotiations with a committee of banks led by Barclays. However, he declined to reveal the extent of Borthwick's financial requirements.

Part of the urgency arises from the need for working

capital to finance operations in New Zealand and Australia where Borthwick has extensive interests. The main reason there is presently in full swing.

Mr Wheeler-Bennett said that Australian banks also had loans out to Borthwick, and that he and the company's finance director would be travelling to Australia and New Zealand soon.

Another aspect of Borthwick's difficulties is that under present financing arrangements the company is due to repay £1.5m within one to two years, with a further £18m due to be repaid in between two and five years.

Morgan Grenfell is acting for Borthwick in negotiations.

Mr Wheeler-Bennett said that there was no fundamental disagreement with the auditors over the principle of the £1.5m clawback provision, made necessary by recent changes in the rules governing deferred tax relief.

He considered the changes "unfair and irrational" and had made representations to the Inland Revenue.

In his annual statement, Dr Bullen said that the business outlook in Britain and the rest of Europe was good. On average one shop a month would be opened in Britain or France. But he said that the high price of beef meant that margins on exports to the United States would remain small.

Privy Council asks institution to explain abrupt policy switch

Engineers head towards uncharted waters

The Privy Council is understood to have intervened in the dispute within the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE) over plans for a new watchdog body for engineering. The IEE is one of the big three engineering institutions.

The move could cause serious delays in launching the new body because of fresh difficulties involving other engineering institutions and the Council of Engineering Institutions (CEI).

The Privy Council, which grants and police Royal Charters, apparently has asked the IEE's leadership to explain why the institution switched policy without taking account of its members' opinions. The Privy Council has powers to

discipline the IEE's governing council or revoke its charter.

A central factor could be a poll of IEE members carried out in November 1979 when 92 per cent favoured a new watchdog body with statutory backing to operate a licensing system for engineers.

It is understood that a copy of the poll has been called for by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, who is a member of the Privy Council and who is attempting to get final agreement on the structure of the new body.

Sir Keith has proposed a chartered body and set his face against any statutory backing. But until the middle of last year the IEE was in the fore-

front of the campaign for statutory regulation. Then, following leadership changes, the IEE in a surprise policy switch backed Sir Keith's proposal.

There have been suggestions since that the IEE, despite Sir Keith's views, would continue to seek statutory backing in the longer term.

The dispute takes another turn tomorrow with an emergency meeting of the IEE called by a group of members led by Mr Arthur Palmer, Labour MP for Bristol North-East. Members will be asked to repudiate the policy switch and secure a return to the IEE's previous stance.

This again would upset Department of Industry attempts

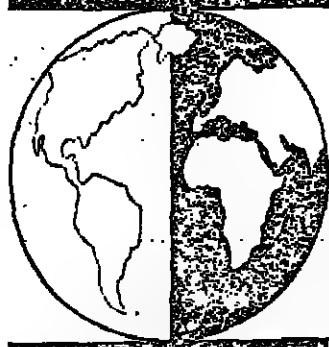
to secure broad agreement on the watchdog body's structure. These manoeuvres could lead members of the smaller engineering institutions to question their leaders' commitment to the Joseph Plan.

Also, the CEI has yet to be persuaded that it should give up its own royal charter to make way for the new organization. The CEI shares concern in the profession that the Department of Industry favours over 50 per cent representation on the new body for industry rather than individual engineers. Much is likely to depend on how many industrialist members are also professional engineers.

Derek Harris

PRICE CHANGES

Rises				
Anglo Am Corp	15p to 69 1/2	Owen Owen	8p to 11 1/2	
De Beers DfD	14p to 42 1/2	Philips Lamps	7p to 36 1/2	
Elabor Gold	15p to 24 1/2	Polly Peck	7p to 16 1/2	
Knox	31p to 72 1/2	Satchi	9p to 26 1/2	
Novell Hids	7p to 17 1/2	Western Areas	31p to 36 1/2	



Bonn talks on Polish financing

Polish officials are due in Bonn at the end of this week to discuss their country's financing position with West German economic ministry officials, informed sources say. The talks are not seen as intergovernmental discussions but as low level briefing consultations between officials before the meeting of Poland's Western creditors later this month in Paris.

Concorde losses

Ninety per cent of the losses incurred by Air France on its Concorde operations will be covered by the French Government under an agreement signed yesterday with the state-owned airline. Under a previous agreement, which expired at the end of last year, the government's share of the loss was 70 per cent. The new agreement expires at the end of 1983.

Chrysler aid denial

Peugeot in Paris has denied a Japanese newspaper report that it is considering joint action with Mitsubishi of Japan to ease Chrysler Corporation's financial difficulties. A spokesman said the report was "a bit of a hoax" and that Peugeot and Mitsubishi would hold talks on Chrysler's problems and might discuss buying Chrysler factories outside the United States.

\$15m Hongkong issue

The Industrial Bank of Japan announces the issue of \$15m (£2.25m), three-year floating rate Certificates of Deposit in Hongkong. This is the bank's first CD issue in Hongkong. Interest will be fixed half-yearly at 1.4 per cent above the six-month London Interbank offered rate.

French car plan

The CGT labour union has called for an emergency plan to help the French car industry. In a letter to President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing CGT outlines a plan which includes cuts in petrol prices, a 50 per cent cut in the value-added tax on small and medium range cars, and a freeze of car prices.

Australia credit

The International Monetary Fund has raised Australia's credit rating enabling it to borrow just over \$12,000m (£4,979m), an increase of more than \$400m. Australia's voting powers have been increased and Australia will be required to contribute more to the Fund's operations.

Air crash decision

Three Chicago appeals court judges have ruled that McDonnell Douglas cannot be sued for punitive damages over the crash of one of its DC-10 jets in the worst aviation disaster in United States history on May 25, 1979, when 273 people were killed.

Fiat talks continue

Fiat will send a delegation to China later this month to continue talks on a possible multi-million dollar contract to build a diesel engine plant and a modernising an existing tractor plant in north China, a Fiat spokesman said in Turin.

Satellites order

Matra has been awarded satellite orders worth a total of 1,260m francs (£113m) by France's National Space Research Centre. The order is for Matra's "spot" observation satellites and for communications satellites, the company said.

Philippine strike

Mr Blas Ople, the Philippine labour minister has ordered about 6,500 miners to return to work, as the strike in one of the country's biggest gold mining companies, the Benguet Corporation, entered its second day.

German bank meeting

The German Federal Bank is unlikely to make any changes to its credit policies at its first central council meeting of the New Year tomorrow, banking economists and market sources said.

Steel cutback

Nippon Steel, Japan's largest steelmaker, is holding down crude steel production in the January-March quarter to 7.1 million tons, the lowest level in 10 years.

Rupee devalued

The Reserve Bank of India devalued the rupee against sterling by 1.31 per cent to a new middle rate of 19.10 to the pound from 18.83.

\$375m refinery

Santos Petroleum is to build a \$375m (£375m) port and refinery for crude oil and natural gas products at Whyalla, South Australia.

Hopes rest on award winning vehicle as group's sales slump

Leyland's truck drive into Europe

Leyland Vehicles, BL's commercial vehicle subsidiary, which is expected to record losses of between £25m and £30m for 1980, has launched a big sales drive into Europe in the hope of boosting sales of its T45 Roadtrain truck.

The £3.5m campaign has been instituted at a time when the United Kingdom truck market has fallen to the lowest levels. This year, some manufacturers believe that total sales of commercial vehicles in Britain will be 40 per cent down on 1979. It was announced yesterday that the Roadtrain, one of a new family of Leyland trucks that has cost £50m to design and develop, has been named Truck of the Year for 1981. LVL said that the award, made by a panel of journalists from 10 countries, would be of incalculable value in the new European drive.

Most of LVL's expected loss for last year occurred in the second half when the home market began to slide into deep recession. The company has streamlined its operation with a series of redundancies, which will mean the loss of a further 2,500 jobs in two months' time.

By then, LVL's labour force will be down to about 18,500 from its January 1979 level of more than 28,000. Most of LVL's workers are working short time.

The T45 project is part of LVL's £350m, five-year development programme and the drive into Europe comes as BL awaits a decision from the Government on its request for additional funds to help to finance its latest corporate plan, which will cost about £1,200m. BL's overall loss for 1980 is expected to be £350m-£400m.

The top-weight Roadtrain is to be launched in Belgium, France, Holland, Spain, Portugal and Denmark and it is hoped that sales will exceed 300 this year. In the United Kingdom, where the vehicle has won 15 per cent of the higher-end articulated tractor market, sales of



The T45 Roadtrain: named as the Truck of the Year by journalists from 10 European countries.

between 900 and 1,000 units are expected this year.

Mr Ian Wilson, LVL's newly-appointed European operations director, yesterday said that it was planned in the next two or three years to double the company's share of the heavy vehicle markets in Europe. "We are going to select carefully the markets where we can get the best growth opportunities," he said.

The Roadtrain, which is to be joined by the next member of the T45 range—a medium-sized truck—in the next two

weeks, is to be sold through LVL's 205 European distributors, many of whom are already BL car dealers. Mr Wilson stressed that, despite the disadvantage of a high value pound, the trucks would be sold at competitive prices.

Leyland Vehicles, now the heavy truck market leader in Britain, is beginning to see the fruits of its big capital spending programme after a decade of under-investment.

Edward Townsend

More work short-time but fewer strikes

By David Blake

Economic Editor

The recession's sharp impact on employment and working hours is charted in the latest issue of the *Department of Employment Gazette*, which shows a big increase in short-time working in autumn. As the winter draws the number of people in employment also fell sharply. But, perhaps because of the downturn in the labour market, 1980 looks like emerging as a year when an unusually small number of days were lost through industrial disputes.

A total of 467,000 workers, 10.4 per cent of the total employed in manufacturing, was on short-time working in October. On average, each lost 15.4 hours or about 38 per cent of the working week. The total in lost hours was 7.19 million, 1.82 million up from September. Most industries were affected, with particularly severe problems in steel, motor cars and textiles and clothing.

Most people on short time lose a few hours a week. But some are laid off for up to a week at a time. Government subsidies have encouraged companies to put their workers on to short time rather than to make them redundant.

But despite these incentives the number of people in employment declined steadily. The total number of people employed in industry fell, on a seasonally adjusted basis, by 94,000 in October to 8,258,000.

Since May 1979, 700,000 jobs have disappeared in industry. Total employment is now 15 per cent below its 1973 level.

The only good news in the latest figures is the sharp reduction in days lost through strikes, which fell to 157,000 in November, about a quarter of the days lost in the same month last year.

In the first 11 months of 1980, a total of 11.9 million days were lost, compared with 29.2 million days lost in the same period in 1979.

Liquidation warning by BSC chairman

By Peter Hill

Economic Editor

If 130,000 workers employed by the British Steel Corporation failed to accept a survival plan it could lead to the liquidation of the business, Mr Ian MacGregor, chairman of the BSC said yesterday.

The corporation is conducting a ballot of the workforce on the plan which means a six-month pay freeze, the closure of some works and the shedding of at least 20,000 jobs. Ballot forms have been distributed by the Electoral Registration Society and the result will be announced at the end of next week.

This ballot coincides with another being organized by the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, the industry's largest single union whose members are being urged to reject the plan.

Interviewed on Independent Radio News, Mr MacGregor, who has warned workers that their support is vital if he is to persuade the Cabinet to provide a further £750m of tax-

payers' money for the BSC next year, said: "If our employees preponderantly reject what we are proposing to do, we are really starting the process of liquidation of the company, because if the employees do not believe in working for its future, why should anyone else?"

He reaffirmed the importance of the BSC attaching to the ballot in an interview with BBC television when he said that if workers showed by their replies that they were not prepared to make the enterprise a success, he would consider it imprudent to ask the Government for more money.

Mr William Sims, general secretary of the ISTC described the BSC ballot as "idiotic, nonsense and a waste of money."

He said: "Our members do not respond to these sorts of threats. Threatening the workforce in this way does not necessarily produce the results Mr MacGregor wants."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Killing 'the goose' with fuel tax

From Mr A. J. Forrester

Sir, It may be naive to suggest it, but it seems that we are allowing depression hysteria to obscure the true tragedy of the present situation in Great Britain.

We are in an unique position among the nations of the world. We, alone, have the combination of our own oil and coal, manufacturing capacity, capability and manpower. Add to that the advantage of the pound's international strength, keeping down the cost of imported raw materials, and we should be in a position to beat the world with our manufactured goods.

It is a proven fact of economics that a reduced unit price increases sales, turnover and profit.

To inflate the price of fuel,

especially oil and gas, to fund Government spending, is to kill the goose before it reaches puberty.

Fuel represents a major factor in industrial and private budgeting. To treat it as a source of taxation revenue, may be an ideal short-term political face-saver, but is disastrous in long-term effect.

Cutting the cost of fuel would not hinder the development of oil and gas supplies. However, it would give British industry the fillip it requires to cut costs and become unbeatably competitive.

This would stimulate employment, thereby reducing the burden of unemployment costs, and stimulate domestic demand, thus building up the home market, so essential to manufacturers.

The Government might well suffer a serious, short-term cash-flow problem, but this would be saved as direct taxes on corporate profits, and private incomes, increase, while the cost of funding unemployment reduces.

As a by-product, this action would reduce the cost of living and so inflation. This, in turn, might encourage union leaders to accept realistic wage settlements.

Can it be that easy? Have I missed some subtle point in the swinging of the fuel tax sledge hammer?

Yours faithfully,
A. J. FORRESTER,
4 Gomer Gardens,
Teddington,
Middlesex,
January 2.

Survival of mass car production

From Mr N. Hussain

Sir, Mr Bourlet's letter (December 30) gives a welcome insight into the realities of left-wing measures to help the economy (high tariffs, etc); however, he seems to have taken for granted the loss of mass produced car production in Great Britain. Yet on the same day Professor Bhaskar's report revealed the political

and economic "unacceptability" of their closure.

Mr Bourlet suggests our comparative advantage lies elsewhere in the United Kingdom economy, but surely the comparative advantage which Japan possesses in motor production is the product of her successful earlier investment. The survival of mass car production in the United Kingdom

must similarly be based on investment to improve our own comparative advantage in mass production—it cannot simply be conjured up out of thin air.

Yours faithfully,
N. HUSSAIN,
London School of Economics,
New Hall,
90 Rosebery Avenue,
London EC1.

Domestic lesson for the national economy

From Mrs Marion Monahan

Sir, "Why is it that our standard of living is going up when everyone else's is going down?" This question from one of my children who had been listening attentively to the "news" made me feel as skilful as an industrialist of one of our booming companies must feel when asked by a worker: "How is it that we have plenty of overtime, a Christmas bonus and a pay rise, while other firms are laying-off workers?"

Or as the head of state of one of the countries at the top of the EEC league table when asked by a member at the bottom: "How is it that you have raised your economic performance while ours is sinking rapidly?"

And being an irresponsibly didactic mother this letter answers my child's question. After all, one day he may have to take responsibility for the management of a family, or a business, or an organization.

Seven years ago my husband was made redundant through ill-health and I was faced with the prospect of bringing up

seven children, five at school and two at home, on invalidity benefit. My husband's illness required constant nursing on my part so there was no question of my being able to go out to work. But we had advantages—a large garden to grow food in and an oil-fired heating system which was economical to run.

No family is an island, however, and world circumstances soon rocked our little boat. The price of heating oil soared, the children's shoes and clothes became major items on the budget, food became dearer. I blessed the small Scottish town where I spent my childhood. There I had survived through the Depression and the shortages of war-time—I knew how to cope.

But our family has more than coped. We have climbed out of our recession brought about by the oil crisis. When our weekly bill for our 15-year-old boiler was touching £3 per week we modernized it. The gas system which replaced it now "saves" us £5 per week and has paid for its own installation cost in a year.

Reduced expenditure on heating has meant enough capital to buy a home freezer. Bulk buying and storing garden produce is saving £10 per week on the food bill, which means I can now buy a vacuum cleaner—reduce the time I now spend cleaning the house.

Hopefully, I will be able to use this time to do what I really best at—craft work, gardening and writing. It should increase our standard living even further by providing craft articles and delicacies for my family which would be a great deal to buy.

So the world hit our family with a hammer and we bounced back to shape. It also hit industry and our country as a whole. If they are to bounce back too is not the secret to found in my story?

1. Cut your coat to fit your cloth—just as I was taught in Scotland.

2. Modernize when absolute necessary.

Yours sincerely,
MARION MONAHAN,
90 Bentry Lane,
Brentley,
Bristol BS10 6RQ.

Loss likely this year for British Airtours

By David Hewson

Economic Editor

British Airtours, British Airways' charter subsidiary, which last year proved one of the ailing airline's most successful operations, is expected to make a loss this year.

The company, which carries passengers for BA's own package tour companies of Sovereign, Enterprise and Speedbird, as well as many other operators, predicts a surplus for the year of £800,000 instead of the £1.8m which BA had planned.

After the payment of interest on the capital invested in the start of a new aircraft fleet to replace the company's aging and costly 707s, Airtours is likely to make a loss, though it is not yet clear by how much.

Mr Stephen Hanscombe, managing director of Airtours, has written in an internal memorandum to staff: "This is a disappointing result for the first year in which we have the advantage of our new and more efficient aircraft, but it does reflect the very difficult conditions in air transport at the present time."

Present time Airtours made a record profit of £4.2m after interest and before tax, compared with £1.7m the previous year. It was one of the bright spots in BA's annual report which disclosed a \$8m drop in post-tax and dividend profit to £4m.

The company's problems in the charter market are likely to be reflected in some of its rivals in coming months. Mr Hanscombe predicts in his memorandum: "Winter is poor and on the basis of forward bookings the total charter market looks like being some 20 per cent down on last year. A number of leading tour operators have launched large programmes but already some of them are having to cut back."

"In addition, because there is a good deal too much capacity on the market, revenue rates are depressed as well as programmes being reduced."

Airtours' problems have been aggravated by the recession in scheduled airline business. It had planned to operate two of its Boeing 737s for BA's mainline operations, but the fall in business meant that they were not required. The decision came too late for Airtours to try to sell the aircraft elsewhere.

Airtours planned to fly 23,200 hours last summer and finished the season with a shortfall of 1,800 hours. Its planned flying hours for the winter have not been disclosed, but the company expects them to fall 2,000 hours below the budget.

British tour operators were optimistic on future bookings when launching their brochures for next year, adding a total of around 20 per cent extra capacity in the charter market.

Claims that the increased capacity is being matched by bookings are being met with some scepticism in the travel business. At least one big package operator's pre-Christmas bookings were below the previous year's levels.

Union plea to Chrysler creditors

Washington, Jan. 6.—Mr Douglas Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers, said Chrysler cannot survive unless the economy improves and interest rates come down.

Mr Fraser said there is still a chance for Chrysler if all parties involved made concessions.

He said UAW officials would meet with Chrysler executives in Detroit tomorrow to spell out what they will want in return for wage concessions.

Chrysler has asked the workers to accept a 21-month wage freeze. Mr Fraser declined to say whether this was acceptable.

He said there is a possibility the union may ask Chrysler to share future profits with workers.

Mr Fraser said Chrysler should ask the Government for all the federal loan guarantees for which it is eligible. Chrysler has been granted \$800m of the \$1,500m in guarantees that Congress has authorized and the company is seeking another \$400m.

Mr Fraser told reporters: "Instead of giving them \$400m, why not give them the \$700m?"

He added he expects others involved in the Chrysler dilemma to make as many sacrifices as the workers.

"I think the banks, if they want to make a corresponding sacrifice, should just write off the loans to Chrysler," he said.

NEDO claims Japanese economic recovery provides lesson for UK

By Peter Hill

Industrial Editor

Mr Geoffrey Chandler, director general of the National Economic Development Office, has said that it would be surprising if Japan's entry into the front rank of developed industrial countries did not provide lessons for the United Kingdom.

Amid growing concern over the inroads into the European market being made by Japanese exports, NEDO has produced a study of Japan's economic and industrial performance. The results of the study form one of a series of occasional discussion papers trying to establish the reason for the continuing economic success of some of Britain's main competitors and suggest which Government, industry and trade unions might exploit.

In a foreword to the report Mr Chandler said: "It would be folly not to try to learn from those who have been more successful than us in a world of industry and technology in which national boundaries are of diminishing importance."

Mr Roger Gibbs, the author of the paper emphasized the important role played by the government in the development and implementation of industrial policy in Japan.

Not only did the Japanese Government determine the economic framework and pursue certain macro-economic policies, it had also tried to stimulate and guide development. "This has been undertaken largely through the encouragement of consensus with industry and the financial institutions, with only marginal commitment of government resources," he said.

The consensus policies and the interplay between government and industry had taken place against a backdrop of social attitudes and institutions which differed in a number of ways from those found in other countries.

They included loyalty to the company by employees and the effects of employment and payments systems which provided for increased flexibility in the development of both capital and labour.

In Japanese industry there was also an acceptance by the financial institutions of high overhead costs "and hence high apparent risk", and there was the traditional close involvement of banks with companies, and the role of government as a last resort.

One of the most significant and intriguing features of Japanese economic development was the role of government, especially the all-pervasive activities of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

A network of advisory councils had been set up, the main body being the Industry Structure Council set up by ministry 16 years ago which with its main sub-committees advised on short and long-term industrial policy. It was unlikely that Britain could expect to achieve significant benefits by borrowing only certain Japanese institutions and policies. To have any effect it would have to make a number of changes.

Successful economies—Japan, Roger Gibbs, NEDO Books, price £2.50.

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Salient Figures

53 weeks to October 3, 1980

	1980	1979
	£'000	
Sales	120,004	98,417
Profit before tax	11,024	5,263
Profit available for Ordinary Dividends	5,147	3,856
Dividends per share	5.46p	4.90p
Earnings per share	27.8p	13.3p

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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Towards the next decision on MLR

The preliminary indication that sterling M3 grew by around one half per cent in the December banking month was rather better than financial markets had been going for. But if that was a plus point, there was some disappointment about the apparent composition of monetary growth last month.

Whereas most analysts had been expecting another low figure for bank lending to the private sector, outweighed by a large expansionary influence from the public sector, the situation appears to have been precisely the reverse. The disappointment in this lies in the fact that whereas a low figure for bank lending would have strongly confirmed the feeling that growth in private sector credit demand was now decelerating fast, a large figure for the public sector's contribution to domestic credit expansion would have been acceptable in view of the turnaround in the public sector's finances expected for the January-March period.

As it turns out, it would seem that the seasonally adjusted PSBR for the period was well down on the November figure and that the non-bank private sector's take-up of public sector debt was higher than official debt sales might suggest. Instead, the real expansionary force in DCE looks to have been private sector loan demand, with the clearing banks alone suggesting an underlying increase of some £400m.

After some of the figures seen earlier last year that is not one to get alarmed about, however. What is more, it may well be that the figure has been inflated by the corporate sector switching back into sterling borrowing as the cost of short term dollar borrowing soared.

Where all this leaves us is another matter. Banking December is an odd month, being only three weeks long. Banking January, lasting five weeks, is equally odd and likely to provide a much more significant set of figures. But those figures, which at this stage may well be considered to hold the key to any MLR cut ahead of the Budget, are unlikely to be pieced together until near the end of the month.

Howden Group Why the bulls are there

It looked as though bulls were taking profits in Howden Group yesterday. The share price of the Glasgow-based air-gas and fluid handling equipment maker fell 16p to 120p on unchanged interim profits of just over £3m accompanied by a maintained dividend. But the reason for the bulls being there in the first place still stands. Howden's record against the mechanical engineering sector



Sir Francis Tombs, former chairman of the Electricity Council, who has just joined Howden Group's board.

has been outstandingly good, and, despite the battering others have taken during the recession, it should maintain some sort of growth this year.

There are some short-term gaps in home order books, but overseas, particularly in South Africa and Australia, business is good. What really counts, however, is that within the next few weeks Howden will sign contracts, worth perhaps £80m spread over five or six years, for supplying gas circulators for the new AGR nuclear power stations. This, a sound balance sheet and the fact that Howden should still cover its dividend

on a current cost basis are reflected in a share price rated on a yield of 4.3 per cent and a p/e ratio of 7.4.

The shares have just about doubled during the past twelve months and there must be a temptation to take profits, though investors with a long-term mixed portfolio could hardly find a safer engineering "hold" at present.

Portals' rights Leaving little to chance

Third time lucky? Portals, the banknote and engineering concern, is raising a net £8.75m through a rights issue at par of £9m of convertible loan stock 1994-2000 in the ratio of £1 nominal of stock for every two shares held. Just before Christmas London Merchant Securities said that 86 per cent of its £25m effort was left with underwriters; just after Christmas Arthur Bell admitted that underwriters were lumbered with 75 per cent of its £14m stock.

Portals wants its money by February 13, so even though the Bank of England with 28.8 per cent of Portals' shares is taking up its entitlement—Morgan Grenfell has underwritten the rest—the merchant bank and its sub underwriters will have plenty of time to worry. Meanwhile one thing is clear. If the Portals convertible flops, this form of fund raising is dead. Underwriters can take only so much.

Happily, the terms of the Portals convertible show that Morgans and broker Rowe Pitman are leaving little to chance. And yesterday Portals shares rose 5p to 335p, in contrast to the plunges suffered by both London Merchant and A. Bell.

The rise was justified. Portals also reported a rise in 1980 pre-tax profits from £11m to £12m, almost maintaining the interim pace, and the dividend is to be 11.4 per cent bigger. Even so the yield is still only 4.6 per cent while the coupon on the convertible is 9.1 per cent. Nor has the group and its advisers made the mistake of pitching the convertible's conversion price too high. The effective conversion price from 1984 on is 400p.

Portals wants the money (despite a clean balance sheet) for a big United States acquisition, and to finance much bigger water treatment contracts, one of which is under negotiation in the Middle East. Selective acquisitions are also indicated, and the record suggests that Portals will use its new money wisely.

For the first time since 1949 there seems to be a real chance that holders of Chinese bonds will be repaid. False dawns have broken before, but on this occasion the combination of the remarkable political change in Peking, the determination of the British Government to settle all outstanding Chinese claims, and the precedent of the 1979 American agreement, makes a settlement probable.

The markets certainly thought so, with normally somnolent dealings leaping back to life as speculative buyers scrambled for the bigger outstanding issues. At the moment, the sellers seem to be holding back, partly because those who bought in the last wave of enthusiasm two years ago are waiting for prices to reach the point where they can make a profit.

But, as we saw with Rhodesian bonds, this is a market which can easily overheat. While it is understandable that bondholders—at £61m the unredeemed bonds have the biggest face value of all the claims listed by the Council of Foreign Bondholders—should be more optimistic, and that speculators should see the prospect of quick capital gains, it is most unlikely that a settlement could be reached for at least two years. Yesterday's excitement could, therefore, be premature.

It is also far from certain that the full value of the outstanding bonds will be paid, and the Chinese Government has not yet abandoned its position that no pre-revolutionary debts will be honoured all the bonds were in default before 1949. Nevertheless, the normally cautious Council is allowing itself a small smile, and if a successful settlement is reached it will be another credit to one of the City's more arcane, but valuable, institutions.

Economic policy: why the Government must keep its nerve

'To alter the constraints now would simply impose a new shock on the economy and would ensure that the sufferings of 1980 were in vain'

It is hard to believe those supporters of Government policy who claim that it is all going according to plan, but at the same time we need not accept the claim that the failures were totally predictable. The past year brought surprises for everybody; what lessons can be learned about the behaviour of the economy and the future course of economic policy?

In 1980, the British economy was subjected to a massive shock. In such cases it is extremely difficult to predict in detail how the economy will respond; we do not know which parts are inflexible and which parts will alter rapidly and extensively.

The shock to the economy was the combination of a continued rise in the exchange rate and a rapid increase in wages. In terms of their international purchasing power, wages in manufacturing rose by more than 15 per cent in real terms during the last pay round. This was far more than the economy could afford and the company sector was forced to find ways to adjust.

The strengthening of international competition as the world boom came to an end and the rise in the exchange rate meant that firms could not pass the higher wages on in higher prices. They held prices down and as a result the level of final demand (consumption, exports and fixed capital investment) remained reasonably strong for much of the year, but the strangeness of cash flows and profits led companies to seek desperately for some way of saving money.

They ran down stocks and so cut orders and production. Stocks took much of the strain; but it was not enough. Employment was cut drastically. It was quite exceptional for unemployment to rise so early and so rapidly in response to a fall in output.

But even this did not relieve the financial strain completely. Companies were forced to borrow heavily and this generated a growth in the supply of money, which the private sector was happy to hold at high real rates of interest. Thus the pressures on the economy and particularly on the company sector produced a sharp fall in output and stocks, a sharp rise in unemployment, and most ironically, a rapid rise in the money supply (sterling M3).

What are the lessons for policy? The experiences of 1980 have revealed a major problem to which it is hard to find any solution. It concerns the behaviour of sterling M3—the cornerstone of the Government's medium-term strategy.

The excessive growth of the money supply in 1980 was partly a response to the pressure on the economy. The Government chose (largely by default) to let the money supply grow and thereby reduced the problems of the company sector without any immediate cost in terms of inflation, although the long-term effect is open to question.

In doing this it demonstrated that it did not regard control of M3 as an over-riding short-term objective of economic policy. It was a long-term policy of reducing the underlying growth of the money supply will remain, presumably, a prime objective. But the short-term

relationship between fiscal policy and the growth of the money supply is, admittedly, very loose.

The problem is that the Government has no short-term guide to its financial policy. It does not know how to react when monetary growth exceeds the upper limits for several months at a stretch. Indeed, it admits that it cannot effectively control the growth of M3 over a period as long as four months or more.

In terms of its longer-term objectives this may be perfectly acceptable, but the idea that the growth of sterling M3 should be on course "taking one year with another" is simply not a sufficient guide to action. It is this lack of a short-term indicator which made it impossible for the Government to judge when it was safe to allow interest rates to fall. (It chose to cut minimum lending rate by 2 per cent at a time when M3 was still well above its limit. This may have been correct, but it is difficult to justify within the context of the medium-term financial strategy.)

The search for a clearer indicator justifies the revived interest in monetary base control, not as a means of controlling the inflation rate from more than 20 per cent a year to under five per cent (or whatever target the Government has in mind). We have seen that wages gained considerable

momentum from the inflation of 1979 and 1980. Since wages did not adjust, employment adjusted instead.

The bitter experiences of 1980 raise questions about how rapidly the counter-inflationary policy should have proceeded and whether it should have been reinforced by other measures to control inflation directly. As far as the future is concerned, I believe that it would be disastrous to abandon or modify the medium-term strategy now.

The first year was bound to be the worst. In its attempt to produce a regime of stable macro-economic policies, the Government started by making changes which caught much of the economy by surprise. The problems for industry were greatly increased by the unexpected (and largely unexplained) rise in the exchange rate. Last year also revealed weaknesses in the Government's own policy instruments. Apart from the question of sterling M3, there is also the potential for a more serious question of whether the Government can control public expenditure.

But, if the strategy is maintained, the economy will be able to come back into balance. There are already encouraging signs that wages at least in the private sector are coming into line with the constraints of the medium-term financial strategy. As wages adjust, it will be possible for output and employment to come back to normal levels.

To alter the constraints now would simply impose a new shock on the economy and would ensure that the sufferings of 1980 were in vain.

Alan Budd

The author is Director of the Centre for Economic Forecasting at the London Business School.

John Huxley

Is Europe heading for a trade war with US?

Fresh talks aimed at averting a damaging trade war between the European Community and the United States will take place over the next few weeks.

The main cause of conflict between the two trading blocs is the American system of subsidising energy prices. This confers upon domestic producers, especially in industries which use the cheap energy both as fuel and feedstock, distinct and undeniable cost advantages.

Britain, in particular, has complained vociferously that these advantages are unfair. It alleges, too, that they have provided the basis for large-scale disruption by United States exports of several key European markets, including synthetic textiles and chemicals.

Until now ministers on both sides have preferred to "jaw" rather than go to war. In recent weeks, however, there have been clear signs that the patience of some Community members is becoming exhausted and that unless action is taken soon to remedy their long-running grievance over energy costs there could be a sharp and serious deterioration in trade relations.

Mr Cecil Parkinson, Minister for Trade in a government which has resolutely refused to be stampeded into protectionism by the domestic textile and clothing lobby, has given a candid warning of the potential dangers.

"There is an obvious unfairness which is much resented by American exporters throughout the world. Unless some action is taken to remove that unfairness, further unfairness will be perpetrated to balance that and away we shall go on the beginnings of a

trade war." At Britain's urging, the Council of Ministers has instructed the commission to hold new talks with the Americans and report back on progress at the end of the month.

At the same time Mr Parkinson has told the new Administration of President-elect Reagan that artificial pricing of energy must be ended; "deregulation" of oil and gas prices, not due to be complete by 1985, must be accelerated.

Meanwhile, the United Kingdom Government wants to see evidence of greater restraint by the Washington administration and American producers, presumably either by limiting their market access to an agreed percentage or by not setting prices at a level which is unrealistically low by European standards.

Pressing advantage

In fact, the Americans have been slow in pressing their advantages, which also include a large and fairly homogeneous domestic market, large economies of scale and, in recent years at least, a dollar exchange rate which has made its products highly competitive in European markets. It is only in the past few years that the United States has made a determined attempt to boost exports.

Britain was a natural target for America's big push in textiles, which resulted in an increase in total export volume in 1979 of 45 per cent over 1978. Apart from the common language, geographical convenience and its free trading tradition, Britain has a well developed and highly concentrated

retail and wholesale structure, which makes it vulnerable to a determined sales assault.

Equally understandable was the decision to attack the man-made sector of the market. British industry leaders allege that the energy cost differential alone confers a price advantage of more than 10 per cent on American products in European markets.

At a time when these markets were depressed and European producers were grappling with severe over-capacity, American imports surged. Industry figures suggest that the United States share of the man-made fibres market in Britain has increased from almost nothing to nearly a third over the past 18 months.

Comparing the first nine months of 1980 with the corresponding period in 1978 increases were recorded as follows: polyester filament yarn, 206 per cent; man-made fibre bed linen, 317 per cent; man-made fibre tufted carpets, 931 per cent; and nylon carpet yarn, 95 per cent. Throughout 1980 fears grew of a similar surge in the export of other man-made fibre products from the United States.

Action to stem the flow has so far been piecemeal and, British industry leaders would argue, ineffective. Last February, Britain was allowed by the commission to introduce quotas under the rules of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) article XIX aimed at curbing imports of

polyester filament and nylon carpet yarns. A quota for man-made carpets was refused. Subsequently, anti-dumping duties were imposed on several products coming from America and European chemical industry leaders were at one time preparing cases for action against about twenty.

British ministers acknowledge that this package of measures has failed to tackle the root cause—energy pricing. Just before Christmas they announced that they would not seek renewal of the quotas. The man-made fibre producers had always argued that the quotas offered too little, too late.

Much will depend on the future pattern of American exporting. If, in spite of a recovery in domestic markets, the US continues to export more and more of its textile and clothing production, the burden of energy costs to domestic industry.

Already, the British textiles industry has said that it would prefer to see the American threat dealt with under the provisions of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA), the complicated machinery by which international trade in textiles and clothing is regulated. For one thing, such a move would not allow the Americans to seek compensation, as permitted under GATT.

Equally, if not more important, it would demonstrate that the MFA is not merely a tool in the hands of the powerful, industrialized nations of the West for use against "disruptive" imports from low-cost sources outside this rich man's club.

They are aware that the West Germans are unwilling to push the Americans too hard on energy for fear of exacerbating trade difficulties and suspect that the commission in general may be even more reluctant to take action. The British Government too lacks the political will to press wholeheartedly the textile industry's case.

This may prove an especially embarrassing task at a time when the United Kingdom Government is engaged in a three-way battle to reduce the burden of energy costs to domestic industry.

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Business Diary: Walters at work • Correlation Street?

Professor Alan Walters, Margaret Thatcher's new economic adviser, began his £50,000 a year job at Downing Street yesterday with an impeccable display of Civil Service sangfroid and devotion to duty. Ignoring reporters' questions with composure and charm he stepped off an overnight British Airways 747 flight from Washington with his wife Paddy and without a sign of jet-lag was taken straight to Number 10 for a 10 am meeting with the Iron Lady in her study.

He then adjourned to the office which has been specially set aside for him and spent the day liaising with his secretary (he has no other staff) about a schedule of meetings with government departments over the next few weeks.

His salary, £21,500 of which is being provided by the Conservative Centre for Policy Studies, has earned him rumblings of discontent from jealous Civil Servants. But they would have approved of him, quite proper message he had for Fleet Street on arrival, and will, I am sure, soon win his way into their hearts.

Professor Walters, who has been turned from his position as professor of Economics at the University of Liverpool, announced: "I don't now the exact details of my new job, but it will certainly be a challenge. I shall do as much as I can."

Downing Street disclosed that the 54-year-old professor, a hard-line monetarist, will see the Prime Minister frequently and prepare papers for her as requested.

Britain is not the only country where the holders of commercial television franchises feel their grips slackening. Japanese television companies, too, are finding their licence to print yen in question, although in their case it is legal confusion rather than the former IBA chairman Lady Plowden who is to blame.

It all began with the new foreign exchange law, which took many companies off the "restricted" list, under which overseas participation was not allowed above 15 per cent.

Among the beneficiaries are Japanese commercial television companies, to whom listing upon the Tokyo Stock Exchange is increasingly attractive.

So far, so good, except for the existence of another, contradictory, law—the Wireless Telegraphy Act. This empowers the Japanese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications to cancel the licence of a broadcaster if a company should more than one fifth of the equity be acquired by non-Japanese.

In theory, all would still be well, were broadcasters to use another section of this Act to change the articles of association in order to limit overseas participation.

So far, not so good. On top of these two contradictory laws, the Foreign Exchange and the Wireless Telegraphy Acts, there is a third force—the Tokyo Stock Exchange. A clause that intervenes with the transferability of its stock runs counter to the tenets of the Tokyo Stock Exchange and the penalty for this is deletion.

At best, the stock exchange, the ministry and the television

companies are heading for a great lining of "lumpers" pockets. At worst, there could be an even greater all round loss of face.

Two of Japan's biggest broadcasting companies, NTV and TBS, are already quoted. Both have been very attractive to foreign investors.

So far, none of the three parties to this legislative snarl-up has been keen to make the first move in adjusting its set. Nonetheless, Tokyo's money men are beginning to muller that it is about time Zenko Suzuki's new government sorted the matter out. The uncertainty is holding back new broadcasting issues.

Nonura Securities, a leading Japanese merchant bank not normally given to contentious public statements, is already saying in its current newsletter: "Someone had better come up with a bright idea in the not too distant future."

Information moves so quickly in these technological days that Agam Butler must have been as surprised as anybody, particularly in the telecommunications industry, when he received the call to become Minister of State for Northern Ireland.

As Minister of State for Industry, Butler only two months ago had been given responsibility for information technology. Now he is handing over this portfolio, barely mastered, to someone. Kenneth Baker, chairman of the Tory-backed telecommunications industry, is now worrying that representations about the controversial Telecommunications Bill that would have gone through Butler on his way to the Minister. Sir Keith Joseph will be held up while Baker reads his way in.

Needed by the greater publicity won by its more militant continental counterparts and believing that, with Mrs Sally Oppenheim in charge, consumerism in Britain has gone distinctly off the boil, the Consumers' Association is at last planning to mobilize its task force of more than 600,000 subscribers to Which? magazine.

The next issue will launch a trio of campaigns and ministers and MPs must expect a lot more letters on the chosen subjects. The association is supplying campaign "kits" to all interested readers.

The first things Which? wants to excite its readers about are import controls on foreign clothing, the Common Agricultural Policy, and shop hours legislation. They will pit themselves against the textile and clothing lobbies, arguing that it is mechanization not imports which causes unemployment and that retailers can save more British industry the net loser.

They will oppose the farm lobbies' pressure for higher agricultural prices and they hope to put a hard push to a private member's Bill to allow shopkeepers to open when they want.

Out of place: again I am indebted to reader J. A. Featherstone of Welwyn Garden City for intelligence from Taiwan. While in the port of Keelung, he came across a clinic which sign outside advertising treatment for "sexual impotence".

Ross Davies

FINANCIAL NEWS

Stock markets

Wall Street rally fails to inspire equities

The stock market failed to draw any encouragement yesterday from the overnight rally on Wall Street, which came after further falls in the prime rate and share prices drifted lower.

Even the money supply figures, which showed a rise of only 0.2 per cent last month, and the bank lending figures provided little impetus as persistent nervous selling continued. The Wholesale Price Index was apparently discounted.

Dealers reported plenty of stock on offer as hopes of a post-Christmas rally continued to fade and end of the account drew closer. Electricals were a weak sector, particularly among companies with defence contracts, after the Cabinet shuffle. The consensus was that the new market would be the most to need defence spending, which could only mean bad news for defence oriented groups.

Oils were another dull sector as further large amounts of stock came on offer with not a buyer to be seen.

Gilt started on a firm note, however, taking some comfort from the news of lower interest rates in the United States. But with the new tap starting dealings tomorrow, and the prospect of several cash calls next week, buyers remained wary.

Despite rises in up to £3 at one point, longs drifted in the wake of the money supply so that by the close gains had been restricted to between £1 and £3.

News after hours of a further cut in prime rates to 191 per

cent by the Chemical Bank saw equities attempt a rally. But it was short lived and the FT Index closed at its low point for the day 53.10 at 467.6.

Reports that the Government had invited claims for compensation for the Chinese Communist revolution of 1949 saw a flurry of activity in Chinese

China 5 per cent 13½ at £10 to £11 with similar rises in China 5 per cent 12 at £20 and

Pearson Longman, quoted publishing subsidiary of S. Pearson, slipped 1½ to 164½.

There was a nervous nervous, and there has been a suggestion—strongly denied by the Pearson camp—that it may be thinking of selling the prestigious Financial Times.

China 4 per cent Engineering at £10.50, good gain in shares seen in China 5 per cent Boxer, up £8 at £17.

Leading industrials had a worrying session, overshadowed by Fisons, down 18p at 175p, announcing restructuring plans resulting in the loss of over 1,000 jobs. ICI fell 4p to 315p, Beecham 1p to 175p, Glaxo

6p to 266p, Unilever 3p to 453p, Courtauld 1p to 54p, Dunlop 2p to 68p and BAT 2p to 241p.

On the results front disappointing performances left Brown & Tawse 1p off at 100p.

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with Rascal 3p to 328p, Plessey 3p to 266p, AB Electronic 10p to 115p, Ferranti 10p to 450p, Westland 2p to 143p and

Bawker Sideley 6p to 246p. Elsewhere in electricals there was mixed trading. Theatres

EMI eased 1p to 307p ahead of figures due next month.

Shares of Record Ridgway slipped 9p to 38p upon the

Shares of the old bid favourite Queen's rose 8p to 116p yesterday as a large buyer

mopped up 25,000 shares in a thin and sensitive market. This

again set tongues wagging about the possibility of an

underbid bid. But with the shares tightly held by the

family concern, close observers believe a bid remains out of

the question.

announcement that the talks with an anonymous admirer

that might have led to a counterbid had broken down.

Renwick was another weak market, 11p cheaper at 73p, as

the bid from AAH, 2p lower at 178p, lapsed. Rumours which

breakdown in talks between Westminster Property and a

possible suitor left the former a shade easier at 35p. But Davy

Corp hardened 2p to 170p with

more than 1 million shares changing hands as terms from

Enserch Corp begin to look more attractive.

A broker's circular had Buzell Pulp & Paper 6p stronger at

116p and speculative attention lifted Satchi & Satchi 9p to

260p, but fading bid hopes left Wm Collins 8p lighter at 133p.

The recent warning of a cut in the final dividend had

Grattan Warehouses 4p lower at 56p in stores, while in foods

the bumper Christmas had Cullens A* up 8p at 156p.

Hillards 5p higher at 191p and Wm Morrison up 3p at 188p. J.

Sainsbury was unchanged at 388p and Arava Group tumbled 8p to 238p.

With lots of pre-Christmas stock remaining on offer, the

market continued to drift amid persistent small selling. Among the

major BP fell 4p to 408p. Shell 4p to 454p, Ultramar 9p to

515p, Lasso 10p to 717p and Tricrest 6p to 322p.

Equity turnover on January 5 was £70,036m (13,646

bargeins). The most active stocks, according to the Exchange

Telegraph, were GEC, Shell, RIZ, Plessey, Glaxo, Grattan Warehouses, Hanson Trust, ICI,

Imperial Group, Barclays Bank, Midland Bank, Ultramar, Imperial Continental Gas, Allied

Breweries and Charterhall.

Traded options had a better day with 12,343 contracts

in the Grand Metropolitan, Rascal, BP and Shell where the

most active, with most other classes also seeing some trade.

Traditional options were quiet again, with calls arranged

in Royal Oil at 18p, Premier at 11p and Westminster Properties at 41p. There were no puts.

Shares of Record Ridgway tumbled sharply from their

year's peak yesterday as the Sheffield stock maker announced

that the unnamed rival bidder expected to reveal itself by now,

had withdrawn.

The price dropped 9p to 39p, although it remains 2p higher

than the takeover offer announced three weeks ago by the Swedish group Babco. First

closing date for the £4m bid is now set for January 14.

Record's chief executive Mr Mark Alexander said last week

that he was expecting the counter-bid to become formal by

either yesterday evening or this morning.

He said last night: "I am as surprised that they have pulled

out as I was that they approached me." Mr Alexander

was told by the bidders, who still wish to remain anonymous,

on Monday evening that they were not prepared to proceed.

However, the stock market appears to be convinced that a

further rival is waiting in the wings. The price is still

preliminary Babco—unless they intend to increase their offer—

from buying shares in the market.

Wrighton loss after tripled interest charge

F. Wrighton & Sons, made a £180,000 pre-tax loss in its first

half to September 30 against a £60,000 profit; but had a £134,000 tax credit. Interest

costs tripled to £134,000.

Borrowings, which were £5m net at the year-end, rose with the group's relocation to

Nazeing, from Walthamstow. The move will be completed

next month and benefits should show in 1981-82. Meanwhile,

demand is still weak. Interim sales were little changed at

£4.7m.

Ransome Hoffman faces hard time

Ransome Hoffman Pollard's chairman has warned shareholders in his annual statement

that 1980-81 results will suffer significantly from the present

bleak economic climate, notably in the first part, to

end-March.

Profits from the United Kingdom, the group's biggest

market, will fall steeply unless orders improve. But the

electrical interests are expected to keep up their contribution. In

1979-80 the group made £1m pre-tax.

No move by Caparo in CMT bid

Yesterday's news that only a handful of acceptances were

received for Hanson Trust's

£13m bid for Central Manufacturing & Trading has not

prompted any new advances from Caparo.

Caparo, the private investment company which holds the

largest stake of 19.5 per cent in CMT, has still not decided

whether to mount a rival bid for the engineering group.

Caparo hopes to have further information on CMT's current

trading figures by the end of the week before taking any

decisions. Hanson's offer of 49p a share was accepted by

202,000 shareholders out of the total 26m and it has extended

the date until January 26.

Fall at British Cinematograph

Although turnover of British Cinematograph Theatres rose

Brown & Tawse slumps as destocking continues

By Rosemary Casworth

Brown & Tawse, the steel stockholding and engineering

group, said that destocking in the industry was continuing

as after last year's steel strike as it reported a £1m decline in

pretax profits at the interim stage.

With turnover slipping from £28.5m to £26.5m, pretax profits

went from £2.1m to £1.1m in the six months to September 30.

Interest charges increased slightly from £375,000 to

£385,000 during the period, although the group expects

that by April 1982 it will not be paying an interest at all

as the cash position improves constantly with continuing

destocking.

By the end of the current

year Brown & Tawse probably will have interest charges at a

similar level to last year's £800,000. Reserves will improve

by £5m this year with the removal of the possibility of

clawback of previous years' tax relief on stock increases under

the Government's proposals for tax changes in stock relief.

This improvement, coupled with the strong cash balance, has prompted the maintenance

of the interim dividend at 2p.

Mr Douglas Rae, the chairman, says that demand for

steel and tube products has been very weak throughout the

first half and as the recession has deepened, there has been

a further decline. Plant sales and hire have also suffered a

decrease in profits from a lack

of demand in the construction industry.

However, sales of equipment from Europe have benefited

from the strength of sterling as the German mark and the

French franc have depreciated by 20 per cent against the

pound in the last 12 months. Mr Rae added that although

the next three months would continue to be tough for the

group, it was hoping for a steepest price increase in April—

first for 18 months and at the moment steel prices in Europe

appear to be hardening.

Brown & Tawse is also making plans for further

acquisitions. Last August it acquired a stainless steel

cutting company in Rotherham of which it was a creditor.

Optimism as Halma improves

By Our Financial Staff

Halma, the safety system as specialist engineering group, has

remained relatively recession proof, reporting 12 per cent

improvement in profits at its half-year statement.

Turnover increased by 31 per cent to £7.1m and pretax

profits rose from £607,000 to £678,000 in the 26 weeks

September 27.

Direct exports from the United Kingdom came to £1.1m

an increase of 56 per cent. It

operations, the shoe machine and acoustic silencers, which

are used in offices, were particularly resilient, said

David Barber, the chairman.

"Whilst it appears unlikely that the profit during the

second half will equal record levels achieved in the

comparable period last year, we are confident that the group

will continue to produce results better than the average of the

British engineering industry," Mr Barber said.

Ladbroke sells casino for £4.5m

The last of the five Ladbroke casinos in Birmingham was

terday sold to the Glasgow based Reo Stakis Organisation for £4.5m. The deal

was through after the Birmingham City Licensing Committee

agreed to renew the licence and its transfer to Palmora,

subsidiary of Stakis.

Stock Exchange Prices

Electricals weak

6 Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days

CONFIDENTIAL

Residential property

Shakespeare stayed in this house

Elizabethan and Jacobean properties are fairly common on the market, but few can boast, as does Shakespeare House at Andover, Hampshire, to have inspired one of the Bard's great plays, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This village house, 15 miles from Oxford, was an inn in Shakespeare's time and Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, in his series "The Buildings of England", says that Will occasionally stayed here overnight when travelling between London and Stratford. The house with its two acres,

now up for sale (Brown and Merry) for £112,500, has won itself references also in the *Illustrated London News* in 1847 when it was threatened with demolition, in the *Shell's Guide to England* and in *Kelly's Directory*, 1881.

Shakespeare House has all the usual attractive features of Elizabethan properties: fine oak timbering, a staircase said to be Jacobean in origin, inglenook fireplaces, flagged floors and lancet windows with cockspur catches and well-proportioned rooms with higher ceilings than in more cottagey houses of the period.

The accommodation, in good decorative order, includes a large drawing room where an area of wall finish has been rubbed away to reveal what is thought to be a rare example of Elizabethan painted wall decoration, five bedrooms, three bathrooms and a "Shakespeare suite" of two small rooms with exposed beams.

Of less historic, but of equal architectural interest, is More Place, Betchworth, Surrey, a Grade II listed timber framed house, dating from the fifteenth century and enlarged in the seventeenth. On the market at

£250,000 (Knight, Frank and Rutley) has among its noteworthy features a Gothic tower and carved figureheads on the stone chimney, a Tudor arched porch and huge oak beams.

A larger property than Shakespeare House, it has three reception rooms, seven bedrooms, four bathrooms, five attic rooms and a staff flat; it stands in just over five acres and has a range of outbuildings including two cottages and stables.

Going further up market again there is Avishays Estate, Chard, Somerset, once the home of the Every family and reputedly the scene of a narrow escape by its Royalist owner from the Parliamentary forces during the Civil War. The house was also said to be part of the escape route of the ill-fated Duke of Monmouth after the Battle of Sedgemoor in 1685.

The mellowed-brick house is essentially Georgian in character, but features such as carved oak panelling, stone-mullioned and leaded light windows indicate its likely Elizabethan origins. Avishays, which is scheduled as being of historic and architectural interest, includes nine bedrooms, three bathrooms and three reception rooms, a range of live-



Avishays Estate, Chard: a mixture of Georgian and Elizabethan for around £400,000.

stock farm buildings set in its 226 acres, two bungalows and a cottage. The agents, Humphreys of Taunton, are expecting offers in the region of £400,000.

Also in the West country is yet another fine Elizabethan property, Thorougham Slad, a grade II listed manor house in Cotswold stone at Bistrey, near Stroud,

Gloucestershire. It dates from the fourteenth century when it was constructed as three houses with mullioned windows. The main part is now Elizabethan.

In its eleven acres is a second house, Little Greys, also in Cotswold stone and some 200-300 years old. Both properties, which were once owned by the Cadbury

family, have been restored or renovated to a high standard and the whole property, being handled by Hampton and Sons, is expected to go for around £265,000.

At the other end of the price scale there are several small properties, often conversions, such as the Toll House, Col-

chester, Essex. This is a listed grade II building for sale for £70,000 (James Abbott Partnership). The property is thought to be about 300 years old. It is believed to be the original toll house on the main route into town, which became the gardener's cottage to Lenden Manor around 1850. It has two reception rooms and four bedrooms. Around the same price is Little Forge, High Hurstwood, Sussex, a conversion from the original building, reputed to be over 200 years old. The property stands in two acres of garden, adjoining a mill pond with trout stream, waterfalls and bluebell wood. Braxtons, the agents in Uckfield, are asking for offers in the region of £57,500.

Also on the market is a thatched Dorset cottage, thought to be some 350 years old and to have been lived in by the village blacksmith, Blue Haze, in the village of Grange, near Wimborne, is built of mellow old brick and retains original features such as exposed beamed ceilings and inglenook fireplaces. The cottage, in just over three acres, is being offered by Savills for £77,500.

Frances Gibb

COUNTRY PROPERTIES

Lane Fox and Partners

NORTH YORKSHIRE

Leeds 17 miles, 41/43/57/61/65/71/75/79/83/87/91/95/99/103/107/111/115/119/123/127/131/135/139/143/147/151/155/159/163/167/171/175/179/183/187/191/195/199/203/207/211/215/219/223/227/231/235/239/243/247/251/255/259/263/267/271/275/279/283/287/291/295/299/303/307/311/315/319/323/327/331/335/339/343/347/351/355/359/363/367/371/375/379/383/387/391/395/399/403/407/411/415/419/423/427/431/435/439/443/447/451/455/459/463/467/471/475/479/483/487/491/495/499/503/507/511/515/519/523/527/531/535/539/543/547/551/555/559/563/567/571/575/579/583/587/591/595/599/603/607/611/615/619/623/627/631/635/639/643/647/651/655/659/663/667/671/675/679/683/687/691/695/699/703/707/711/715/719/723/727/731/735/739/743/747/751/755/759/763/767/771/775/779/783/787/791/795/799/803/807/811/815/819/823/827/831/835/839/843/847/851/855/859/863/867/871/875/879/883/887/891/895/899/903/907/911/915/919/923/927/931/935/939/943/947/951/955/959/963/967/971/975/979/983/987/991/995/999/1003/1007/1011/1015/1019/1023/1027/1031/1035/1039/1043/1047/1051/1055/1059/1063/1067/1071/1075/1079/1083/1087/1091/1095/1099/1103/1107/1111/1115/1119/1123/1127/1131/1135/1139/1143/1147/1151/1155/1159/1163/1167/1171/1175/1179/1183/1187/1191/1195/1199/1203/1207/1211/1215/1219/1223/1227/1231/1235/1239/1243/1247/1251/1255/1259/1263/1267/1271/1275/1279/1283/1287/1291/1295/1299/1303/1307/1311/1315/1319/1323/1327/1331/1335/1339/1343/1347/1351/1355/1359/1363/1367/1371/1375/1379/1383/1387/1391/1395/1399/1403/1407/1411/1415/1419/1423/1427/1431/1435/1439/1443/1447/1451/1455/1459/1463/1467/1471/1475/1479/1483/1487/1491/1495/1499/1503/1507/1511/1515/1519/1523/1527/1531/1535/1539/1543/1547/1551/1555/1559/1563/1567/1571/1575/1579/1583/1587/1591/1595/1599/1603/1607/1611/1615/1619/1623/1627/1631/1635/1639/1643/1647/1651/1655/1659/1663/1667/1671/1675/1679/1683/1687/1691/1695/1699/1703/1707/1711/1715/1719/1723/1727/1731/1735/1739/1743/1747/1751/1755/1759/1763/1767/1771/1775/1779/1783/1787/1791/1795/1799/1803/1807/1811/1815/1819/1823/1827/1831/1835/1839/1843/1847/1851/1855/1859/1863/1867/1871/1875/1879/1883/1887/1891/1895/1899/1903/1907/1911/1915/1919/1923/1927/1931/1935/1939/1943/1947/1951/1955/1959/1963/1967/1971/1975/1979/1983/1987/1991/1995/1999/2003/2007/2011/2015/2019/2023/2027/2031/2035/2039/2043/2047/2051/2055/2059/2063/2067/2071/2075/2079/2083/2087/2091/2095/2099/2103/2107/2111/2115/2119/2123/2127/2131/2135/2139/2143/2147/2151/2155/2159/2163/2167/2171/2175/2179/2183/2187/2191/2195/2199/2203/2207/2211/2215/2219/2223/2227/2231/2235/2239/2243/2247/2251/2255/2259/2263/2267/2271/2275/2279/2283/2287/2291/2295/2299/2303/2307/2311/2315/2319/2323/2327/2331/2335/2339/2343/2347/2351/2355/2359/2363/2367/2371/2375/2379/2383/2387/2391/2395/2399/2403/2407/2411/2415/2419/2423/2427/2431/2435/2439/2443/2447/2451/2455/2459/2463/2467/2471/2475/2479/2483/2487/2491/2495/2499/2503/2507/2511/2515/2519/2523/2527/2531/2535/2539/2543/2547/2551/2555/2559/2563/2567/2571/2575/2579/2583/2587/2591/2595/2599/2603/2607/2611/2615/2619/2623/2627/2631/2635/2639/2643/2647/2651/2655/2659/2663/2667/2671/2675/2679/2683/2687/2691/2695/2699/2703/2707/2711/2715/2719/2723/2727/2731/2735/2739/2743/2747/2751/2755/2759/2763/2767/2771/2775/2779/2783/2787/2791/2795/2799/2803/2807/2811/2815/2819/2823/2827/2831/2835/2839/2843/2847/2851/2855/2859/2863/2867/2871/2875/2879/2883/2887/2891/2895/2899/2903/2907/2911/2915/2919/2923/2927/2931/2935/2939/2943/2947/2951/2955/2959/2963/2967/2971/2975/2979/2983/2987/2991/2995/2999/3003/3007/3011/3015/3019/3023/3027/3031/3035/3039/3043/3047/3051/3055/3059/3063/3067/3071/3075/3079/3083/3087/3091/3095/3099/3103/3107/3111/3115/3119/3123/3127/3131/3135/3139/3143/3147/3151/3155/3159/3163/3167/3171/3175/3179/3183/3187/3191/3195/3199/3203/3207/3211/3215/3219/3223/3227/3231/3235/3239/3243/3247/3251/3255/3259/3263/3267/3271/3275/3279/3283/3287/3291/3295/3299/3303/3307/3311/3315/3319/3323/3327/3331/3335/3339/3343/3347/3351/3355/3359/3363/3367/3371/3375/3379/3383/3387/3391/3395/3399/3403/3407/3411/3415/3419/3423/3427/3431/3435/3439/3443/3447/3451/3455/3459/3463/3467/3471/3475/3479/3483/3487/3491/3495/3499/3503/3507/3511/3515/3519/3523/3527/3531/3535/3539/3543/3547/3551/3555/3559/3563/3567/3571/3575/3579/3583/3587/3591/3595/3599/3603/3607/3611/3615/3619/3623/3627/3631/3635/3639/3643/3647/3651/3655/3659/3663/3667/3671/3675/3679/3683/3687/3691/3695/3699/3703/3707/3711/3715/3719/3723/3727/3731/3735/3739/3743/3747/3751/3755/3759/3763/3767/3771/3775/3779/3783/3787/3791/3795/3799/3803/3807/3811/3815/3819/3823/3827/3831/3835/3839/3843/3847/3851/3855/3859/3863/3867/3871/3875/3879/3883/3887/3891/3895/3899/3903/3907/3911/3915/3919/3923/3927/3931/3935/3939/3943/3947/3951/3955/3959/3963/3967/3971/3975/3979/3983/3987/3991/3995/3999/4003/4007/4011/4015/4019/4023/4027/4031/4035/4039/4043/4047/4051/4055/4059/4063/4067/4071/4075/4079/4083/4087/4091/4095/4099/4103/4107/4111/4115/4119/4123/4127/4131/4135/4139/4143/4147/4151/4155/4159/4163/4167/4171/4175/4179/4183/4187/4191/4195/4199/4203/4207/4211/4215/4219/4223/4227/4231/4235/4239/4243/4247/4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